THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF Spiritual Husbandry,

In breaking up our

FALLOW GROUND

Together with a

DISCOURSE

Of the Terrible Coming of

CHRIST,

To Execute Vengeance on all that remain *Fallow Ground*, and Obey not the *Gospel*.

By *SAMUEL TOMLYNS*, M.A. and Minister of the Gospel in *Marlborough*.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

Richard Wollaſton, *Eſq;*

Grace, Mercy, and Peace, be multiplied, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

A Spiritual Lethargy is the reigning Diſeaſe of this Age: The Deſign of theſe Diſcourſes is, to Alarm the Secure, to Awaken the Sleeping World. Tho' Chriſt hath been a great while Inviſible, yet he will Appear to the Confuſion and Terror of his Adverſaries. Tho' he hath long kept Silence, yet he will roar out of Zion. *Tho' his Sword hath ſlept, yet it will awake; do Execution on, and be Bathed in the Blood of Impenitent Sinners. The Sins of Men, and the puniſhing Hand of Chriſt, will find out all his Enemies,* Numb. 32. 23. Pſal. 21. 8. *He that came at firſt to ſave Men from their Sins, yet being ſlighted, and rejected, will come a ſecond time to deſtroy Men for their Iniquities. They that have not prized a Day of Salvation, ſhall Experience, and feel a Day of Vengeance and Deſtruction. How woful will the Eſtate of Sinners be, when their own Accuſing Conſciences ſhall be as a* fiery Oven, *Pſal.* 21. 9. *within, and the Vengeance of God be as a Furnace of Fire*

without; and Sinners shall be Supported (though but Tares and Chaff) to be Eternal Fuel to this Fire. It will be sweet to have a Well of Spiritual Water springing up within, *John* 4. 14. *but it will be dreadful to have a Well of Fire to be burning in his Soul.* Alvarez de Semedo, *in his History of* China, *speaks of such Wells of Fire, kindled from Sulphurous Matter, that burn and flame continually. The corruption of the Soul allowed will breed that Worm that never dies. I shall Rejoyce if the said Discourses do stir up Sinners to escape the Corruption that is in the World through Lust, and to flee from the Wrath to come. I have a due Respect to you, for appearing for* Nonconformists *in your Station, that they might not be over-prest with Burdens. I shall be glad, if what I have written, may contribute to the Advancement of your Salvation, and stir you up to prepare to meet the Lord of Glory, and to stand before the Judge of the whole World, whose Eye, Book, and Balance, will be dreadful to hardened Sinners at last. But that Christ may appear as a Redeemer, to perfect your Liberty, and as a Bridegroom to marry your Soul, is the earnest desire of,*

Your Sincere,
and Affectionate Friend,
and Servant,
Samuel Tomlyns.

2 Thes. I. 7, 8.

And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angels,
In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

IN these two Verses, there are several weighty Truths, 1. A Benefit that will be bestowed on Suffering Christians, God will render Rest to those that are Troubled. And *Paul* applies this sweet Truth to himself; he puts in for a share, and claims an Interest in it, Rest with us. 2. We have the Time when this Benefit

ſhall be beſtowed; it is when the Lord Jeſus ſhall be Revealed from Heaven. The full Deliverance of the Oppreſſed Saints, is Suſpended till the Revelation of Chriſt; he ſhall then do Right to the Oppreſſed, and execute Vengeance on the Oppreſſors: It is but reaſonable, that the Reſt of the Members ſhould depend on the Reſt of their Head, *Pſal.* 45. 3, 4. Chriſt is now deſired *to gird his Sword on his Thigh, and to ride proſperouſly on the word of Truth and Righteouſneſs.* And Chriſt is ſet forth by *one riding on a white Horſe, with a Bow in his Hand, and he went forth Conquering, and to Conquer.* The Church is compared to the Horſes in *Pharaoh's* Chariot, *Cant.* 1. 9. becauſe by her Miniſters ſhe draws the Spiritual and Victorious Chariot of Chriſt through the World. Though Chriſt hath a Reſt, as to his Perſon, in Heaven, and is above the reach and rage of his Enemies, yet he is contending with, and fighting againſt his Enemies: He is winning the Hearts of his Elect, and gathering them into his Kingdom; and he is breaking his Enemies to pieces, and putting them under his Feet, 1 *Cor.* 15. 25, 26. but at laſt Chriſt will perfect, and finiſh his Work. He will appear as a Glorious and Triumphant Conqueror, as one that hath won the Field, and gained the Day: He will ſit on the

Throne

Throne of his Glory, *Matt.* 25. 31. This implies a perfect Rest; he shall fight, and make War no more, his People shall enter into his Palace, *Psal.* 45. 14, 15. and sit down with him in his Throne, *Rev.* 3. 21. and his Enemies shall be adjudged to Tormenting Fire, and be shut up in an Eternal Prison. 3. We have the Company that shall wait on Christ at his Appearing; he shall come with his mighty Angels. 4. We have the terrible manner of his Appearance, it shall be in flaming Fire. Christ is perfectly Holy and Righteous; he can appear in flaming Fire, yet not be hurt by it, or suffer any thing from it. This Fire will be hurtful to Christ's Enemies, but harmless to himself. He that appeared at first as the Day-spring from on high, comfortably to direct straying Souls into the way of Peace: He that arises to those, that fear God's Name, as a *Sun of Righteousness, with healing under his wings*, Mal. 4. 2. will now be revealed in flaming Fire, to punish obstinate Rebels. They that have refused, and rejected Christ as a *refining fire*, Mal. 3. 2, 3. shall now, to their cost, feel him to be a *consuming fire*. He that once appeared incompassed with beams of Love, shall now a second time appear surrounded with flames of Wrath. 5. We have the end of Christ's Revelation, or why he will appear; it is to

render Vengeance. It is in the Greek, διδόντος, giving Vengeance. O how dreadful and terrible a Gift is this! He that is God's Almoner, to distribute God's Alms of Mercy to poor penitent begging Sinners, will have no other Gift to bestow on impenitent, and unbelieving Souls, but Vengeance. *It is said vengeance belongeth to me, and I will recompence*, Heb. 10. 30. Though to the Penitents and Believing, it is said, *To the Lord belongeth Mercy*, yet, as to obstinate Sinners, *Vengeance belongs to God.* Punishment is a just Debt belonging to the Wicked, therefore it is said that God will repay Fury to his Adversaries, *Is.* 59. 18. he will render his Anger with Fury, and his Rebukes with Flames of Fire, *Is.* 66. 15. *Paul* charges Christians to render to all their due, *Rom.* 13. 7. so Christ will render to hardened Sinners their due. Sinners owe God glory, to be raised out of their Misery and Eternal Torments: They will still be making Restitution, yet never will be able to make Satisfaction to God: they will to Eternity be in debt to God, there will still be an Arrear of Wrath, a Debt of Vengeance due to them; and this Vengeance will come immediately from God and Christ. From God's angry frowning Face. 2 *Thes.* 2. 8. from his punishing Hand, *Heb* 10. 31. his angry breath will blow up the

Fire

Fire that ſhall torment them, *Iſaiah* 30. laſt. The weighty Feet of Chriſt, as fine Braſs, will bruiſe and cruſh Sinners as Grapes of Galls, as bitter Cluſters, when he ſhall tread the Wine-Preſs of the Fierceneſs and Wrath of Almighty God, *Revel.* 1. 15. *Rev.* 14. 15. 6. On whom ſhall this Vengeance be Executed? It is *on thoſe* that know not God, *and obey* not *the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus.* This is an extenſive comprehenſive Vengeance, it will reach the whole corrupt and unregenerate World. It is ſaid that the *Gentiles* knew not God, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 5. and there are too many in the Viſible Church that do hate Knowledge, *Prov.* 1. 29. and that through deceit, do refuſe to know God, *Jer.* 9. 6. leſt Light ſhould diſcover their Deformity, awaken their Conſciences, diſturb their Carnal Peace, obſtruct and imbitter their Senſual Pleaſures, and Carnal Delights; therefore Chriſt Taxes and Cenſures the whole Unconverted World as guilty of Ignorance, *O Righteous Father, the World hath not known thee,* John 17. 25. Thoſe that obey not the Goſpel, ſhall be the Objects of Chriſt's Wrath, the Subjects of his Vengeance, where the Light of the Goſpel hath ſhined, where the Hands of Wiſdom have been ſtretched out; where Men have been beſeeched to be reconciled to God, have been wooed to be

Eſpouſed to Chriſt, but yet have cloſed their Eyes againſt the Light, *Matth.* 13. 15. and have ſtopped their Ears againſt the Call of the great Shepherd, and the Voice of the Bleſſed Bridegroom; theſe ſhall have the heavieſt Puniſhment, and the hotteſt Hell.

Doctrine 1. *The Perſecuted People of God ſhall have Reſt at the Revelation of Chriſt.* Iſaiah 14. 3. *The Lord ſhall give thee Reſt from thy Sorrow, from thy Fear, and from the hard Bondage wherein thou waſt made to ſerve.*

Saints ſhall have a Reſt, 1. From their Enemies; they ſhall no more tread on their Necks, or ride over their Backs, *Pſal.* 66. 12. *Iſaiah* 51. 23. Enemies have proudly ſaid, *Bow down, that we may go over,* and the *Bodies of Saints have been laid as the Ground, and as the Street, to them that went over.* The way that Enemies have choſen is over the Necks and Backs of the Saints; but it is ſaid to the People of God, The Lord hath taken away thy Judgments, he hath caſt out thine Enemy; thou ſhalt not ſee evil any more; the Plowers ſhall not always Plow on the Backs of the Righteous; the Rod of the Wicked ſhall not reſt on their Lot, *Pſal.* 125. 3. they ſhall not always

ways reach out the Cup of their Fury to Saints, becauſe they will not ſtain their Garments, defile and inſlave their Conſciences to their Luſts.

Two things evidence that Saints ſhall have Reſt from their Enemies and Sufferings:

1. That Enemies ſhall be Conquered and totally Subdued: Thoſe that fear God's Name ſhall go forth and tread down the wicked, *they ſhall be as Aſhes under the Soles of their Feet*, Mal. 4. 2, 3. And the God of Peace will bruiſe Satan under the Feet of Believers, *Rom.* 16. 20. ſo that Satan, and wicked Men, ſhall be totally vanquiſhed and diſabled from hurting and offending the Saints, they ſhall be ſhut up in the Priſons, and burn in the Furnace. The 92 *Pſalm* hath this Title, *A Pſalm for the Sabbath day*; in it the Pſalmiſt affirms, That the wicked ſhall be deſtroyed; and that the Enemies of God ſhall periſh, *Pſal.* 92. 7, 9. This is a proper Meditation for the Sabbath day; God, and Saints too, will not have a faithful, perfect, and delightful Sabbath, till all the Workers of Iniquity are Conquered and Deſtroyed.

2. The Saints will be perfected in Holiness, and in the Life of God; so that they will not need afflictions any more. Where there is no Dross, there needs no Refining Fire: Where there is no Folly, there is no Rod of Correction necessary; they do not need the Flail, nor the Fan, who are perfectly winnowed from their Chaff. They that are fully freed from Sin, shall be no more liable to Death, Pain, Sorrow, or Crying, *Rev.* 21. 4. the corrupt Root that bears all these Evils is withered and dead.

2. Saints shall Rest from their Labour, *Rev.* 14. 13. Though the Son of Man give the Spiritual Bread, *Joh.* 6. 27. yet we are bid to Labour for it. It is hard to perswade our selves of the Excellency and Necessity of this Bread, and that the Son of Man can, and will, give it to Creatures so vile, unworthy, and provoking, is a very difficult, hard, laborious thing; we need to wrestle with God, and cry out, *Lord, help our unbelief*, Mark 9. 24. evidence Spiritual, Invisible Things to us.

3. Saints shall Rest from their Spiritual Journies and Travels. *Jacob*'s Sons took long Journies into *Egypt* to buy Corn, to procure Bread, but when *Jacob* and his Family removed into *Egypt*, they ceased from such Journies;

Journies; they were then at the very Granaries of Corn. *Joseph* there nourished his Father, his Brethren, and their Households with Bread, without Travelling, or Payment for it; so Saints shall have access to, and satisfaction, by eating of the Fruits of the Tree of Life, that shall still be ripe, and ready to be enjoyed, *Rev.* 22. 22.

2. As Saints shall have Rest by their Freedom from all Evils, Sufferings, Enemies, Labours and Travels, so they shall rest in the enjoyment of the highest, and best Good.

1. They shall rest by the Fountain of Life, where they may be satisfied, and drink their fill as Caravans, or great Companies of Merchants do, Travel through dry Deserts and Wildernesses, till they come to a Spring, and then, and there, they pitch their Tents, and refresh themselves by drinking of the Spring; so we must pass on through Creatures dry and barren, till we come to God the Fountain of Life. Here we must stop and delight our selves in him, and with him. *Psal.* 36. 9. *With thee is the Fountain of Life, in thy Light we shall see Light*; that is, the Light of Joy and Consolation. *The Lamb shall lead his Sheep to living Fountains of Water*, Rev. 7. 17 as if every Saint had a Foun-

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tain to himself, and did enjoy God as fully, as if he did ſolely, and only enjoy him: How ſweet is it to reſt by the Fountain of Life for ever?

2. Saints ſhall reſt in the Houſe of a Father, and a Husband; in the Houſe of a Father, Chriſt ſaith, *In my Fathers Houſe are many Manſions; I go to prepare a place for you*, John 14. 2. and ſo they that reſt in the Houſe of their Heavenly Husband. *Naomi* did pray her Daughters-in-Law might find reſt, each of them in the Houſe of her Husband, *Ruth* 1. 9.

3. Saints ſhall reſt at the Table of Chriſt, they ſhall ſit, eat, and drink with him, at his Table, *Luke* 22. 29, 30. in his Kingdom. There is no Good abſent at this Feaſt, to cauſe a wandring of deſire; no Evil preſent to cauſe ſighs and ſorrow under it: Here Saints may eat, and be ſatisfied for ever.

4. This will be a moſt Honorable Reſt; Saints that ſit in the Throne with Chriſt, *Rev.* 3. 21. and reign in life for evermore. As *all Tears ſhall be wiped from their Eyes*, ſo Crowns ſhall be ſet on their Heads, a Crown of Life and Righteouſneſs, *Rom.* 5. 17. This is the higheſt Honour that Creatures can aſpire to, and therefore may be fully ſatisfied

fied with, and reſt in it. This Honour ſhall never be forfeited, neither ſhall this Feaſt be diſturbed and interrupted.

5. The Saints, that now are troubled, ſhall reſt with the beſt Company, they ſhall be where Chriſt is, *Joh.* 17. 24. and *they ſhall ſit down with* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *in the Kingdom of God*, Matth. 8. 11. As they have been Companions with other Suffering Saints, in the Kingdom, and patience of Chriſt, *Rev.* 1. 9. ſo they ſhall enter into the ſame Joy, poſſeſs the ſame Inheritance, and partake of the ſame Feaſt with them. If Servants ſhall be where their Lord is, *John* 12. 26. much more may they be aſſured of reſt and refreſhment with their Fellow Servants. Though they be more eminent than they, for Gifts, Graces, and Services, yet they ſhall reſt in the ſame Boſom of Love, and ſit in the ſame Throne of Glory. What harmonious Melody, what ſweet Comfort will there be, when all Suffering Saints ſhall be gathered together, to ſing the Praiſes of their Father, to celebrate the Honour of their Redeemer, and be ſwallowed up for ever in the love of the Father, Son, and Spirit?

USE of the Doctrine. If Troubled Saints ſhall have reſt, then be not afraid of, do not ſtart or recoil from the Croſs of Chriſt, it

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will end, and issue in a Crown of Glory. Your Sufferings are light, your Glory will be weighty; your Afflictions and Sorrows will be momentary, but your Joys will be everlasting, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. Do not buy the Worlds Peace with the Trouble and Terror of your Consciences: Some Apostate Protestants in *France* had such burdened Consciences, such wounded Spirits, grew so weary of Life, that they came and offered themselves to their Antichristian Enemies, and desired that they would kill them. Do not slavishly dread Sufferings for Christ, did not your Lord endure greater Troubles for you? *John* 12. 27, 28. Now, saith Christ, is my Soul troubled; he made his Soul an Offering for Sin, he poured out his Soul to the death, *Isa.* 53. 10, 12. You are but in shallow waters of afflictions, but Jesus Christ was in a deep Sea of Sorrows: You have but some small drops that sprinkle you, but he had a dreadful Storm that fell on him. You have but some sparks that fly on you, but the Lamb of God was roasted by the Fire of his Fathers Anger. Do not think it strange if fiery Trials should be kindled against you, and break out on you, 1 *Pet.* 4. 12. Do not think to be Priviledged from Troubles, and to be Exempted from Hardships on Earth, and yet be secured from Pains and Torments in another World. Sa-

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tan will roar, and wicked Men will rage againſt you. *In the World you ſhall have Tribulation, but in Chriſt you ſhall have peace,* John 16. 33. Though wicked Men do ſcorch your Bodies, yet your Souls do ſit under Chriſts cold ſhadow, *Cant.* 2. 3. *And you ſhall have times of refreſhing from the preſence of the Lord,* Acts 3. 19. Though you are appointed to Afflictions, 1 *Theſ.* 3. 3. yet God hath not appointed you to wrath, but to obtain Salvation by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 9. You are now clouded with Sorrows and Reproaches, but you ſhall ſhine out in the Kingdom of your Father, *Matth.* 13. 43. Your ſmoaking Furnace will iſſue in a burning Lamp, *Gen.* 15. 17. your ſighs will be ſucceeded by Songs, your darkneſs and ſhadow of Death will end in a bright and glorious Morning. Perſecutors will be caſt into Priſon, and the Perſecuted taken into the Palace. Enemies ſhall feel cruel Bondage, and Saints be Tranſlated into glorious Liberty. Wicked Men now Revile and Reproach the People of God, but the Time is at hand when *Chriſt will laugh at their Calamity, and mock when their Fear cometh,* Prov. 1. 26. but Saints ſhall have praiſe from Chriſt, enter into the joy of their Lord, and enjoy a reſt that will abundantly recompence all their Troubles.

2. When

2. When shall this rest be enjoyed? It is said, when the Lord Jesus shall be Revealed; Two things are here affirmed, 1. That the Lord Jesus shall be Revealed. 2. That he shall be Revealed from Heaven. The words give this Doctrine.

Doct. 2. *The Lord Jesus shall be Revealed from Heaven.* 1. *The Lord Jesus shall be Revealed.* 2. *He shall be Revealed from Heaven.*

1. The Lord Jesus shall be Revealed: This is necessary on a double Account.

1. Jesus Christ was veiled and clouded in the World; the Sun of Righteousness was in a continual Eclipse for about 33 Years. Tho' he was Rich, yet for our sakes he became Poor, 2 *Cor.* 8, 9. Tho' he was full, yet he emptied himself, *Phil.* 2. 7, 8. Tho' he was Lord over all, God over all, *Rom.* 9. 5. yet he took on him the form of a Servant; and this was as a thick Veil cast over all his Glory, *Phil.* 2. 9. The World saw no beauty in him, *Is.* 53. 2. He was a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, *Psal.* 22. 6. He was trod on as a Worm, *Ps.* 10. 9. 23. and tossed up and down as a Locust by the Wind of his Adversaries fury. From the Garden he was led to *Annas*, from *Annas* to *Caiaphas*, from

Caiaphas

Caiaphas to *Pilate*, from *Pilate* to *Herod*, from *Herod* to *Pilate* again, then to *Golgotha*. Thus the Scripture was fulfilled, That he was toſſed up and down as a Locuſt: So mean was his Condition, and ſo low his Circumſtances, that the World did not know him, *John* 3. 1. and therefore a glorious Appearing of his is neceſſary, *Tit.* 2. 13. to let all the World know who, and what he is, and how they have been miſtaken.

2. Jeſus removed, and withdrew himſelf from the World; he is Travelled into a far Country, *Luke* 13. 12. He is gone within the Veil, *Heb.* 6. 19, 20. He is hid with God, *Col.* 3. 3. Thouſands do love him tho' they have not ſeen him; and believe on him, tho' they do not yet ſee him, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. The Object of our Faith is become inviſible, and far removed from the Eye of Senſe; and Chriſt doth ſtay ſo long, that Wiſe and Fooliſh Virgins do fall aſleep, *Matt.* 25. 5. And his Rebellious Citizens ſend a Meſſage after him, ſaying, *We will not have this Man to reign over us*, Luke 19. 14. All thoſe they cruelly perſecuted, and wickedly ſlew, for Proclaiming Chriſt as King, and calling them to bow down to his Royal Scepter, were ſent in this Embaſſy, or with this Meſſage, after Chriſt, to tell him his Citizens, the *Jews*, would not admit him as their King to

Reign

Reign over them; and the Prophane and Atheistical World do ridicule, mock and scorn, at the Promise of his coming, 2 *Pet.* 3. 3. They that walk after their own Lusts, and place their Happiness in satisfying of them, would not have Christ come to interrupt their Life of Sensuality, or to punish them for it. They would never have Christ come, and hope he will not appear; and therefore, with insulting Belief, say, Where is the Promise of his coming?

In the Prosecution of this Subject, I shall insist on these three Things. 1. I shall demonstrate that the Lord Jesus will be Revealed. 2. What the Scripture asserts about his coming. 3. When the Lord Jesus will be Revealed. Tho' we cannot point out the particular Time, yet there are some general Intimations given us in Scripture when he will come.

1. *That the Lord Jesus will come,* 1. God the Father will send him, *Acts* 3. 20. *Peter* saith, That God would send Jesus, who before was preached to them. And *Paul* speaking of the appearing of Christ, he affirms, that in his Times, he shall shew this Appearance, who is the blessed and only Potentate. The Father will exhibit Christ again to the World; this will be the most wonderful glorious

glorious ſhew that ever was preſented to Mankind: He that did ſtand as a Criminal before the Tribunal of *Pilate*, *Matt.* 27. 11. he that did hang on a Croſs of Ignominy, ſhall now ſit on a Throne of Glory, *Matt.* 25. 31. He will Arraign Men for all the Acts of Time, and adjudge them to the Penalties and Rewards of Eternity. All Nations ſhall be gathered before him, ſhall receive their Sentence from him, and be diſpoſed of either to a Bleſſed or Miſerable Eternity by him.

2. Jeſus Chriſt himſelf hath told us of his Return; he compares himſelf to a Noble Man Travelling into a far Country to receive a Kingdom, and return. As the Spirits of Men do return to God to be judged, *Eccl.* 12. 7. 3. ſo Chriſt will return again to judge the World.

3. The Saints live in expectation of Chriſts return; they wait for Jeſus Chriſt from Heaven, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 10. They look for him from Heaven, *Phil.* 3. 20. They look *for the bleſſed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, Tit. 2. 14. Tho' the moſt of Men live, as if they had no Concern in Chriſt's Appearing, as if it would be no Marriage-Day, Feaſt-Day, or Harveſt-Day to them; as if they did not think, or expect to reap any Harveſt of Bleſſedneſs, or to receive any Reward of

Happineſs at Chriſt's coming, yet it would be a great diſappointment to the People of God if he ſhould not return. They look for him as a *Bridegroom*, as a *Saviour*, as a *Redeemer*; and he will appear a *ſecond time unto Salvation, to thoſe that look for him*, Heb. 9. 28.

4. The Angels have teſtified to this Truth, that Jeſus Chriſt ſhould come from Heaven, as the Apoſtles ſaw him go to Heaven, *Acts* 1. 11. And the Angels cannot be falſe Witneſſes and Deceivers.

5. Jeſus Chriſt hath work to do at his ſecond coming: He hath a Harveſt to reap, *Matt.* 13. 30. A Floor to Purge, *Matt.* 3. 12. A Wife to Marry, *Rev.* 7. 25. Servants to reckon with, *Matt.* 19. 21, 30. The Diligent and Faithful he will commend, and call to enter into his own joy; and the Idle and Slothful he will adjudge to be caſt into outer Darkneſs. The great Shepherd will gather his Flock to him, and lead them to ſweet and delicious Paſtures in the Heavenly Paradiſe.

2. Let us obſerve what the Scripture aſſerts concerning his coming.

1. Jeſus Chriſt teſtifies, that he comes quickly, *Rev.* 22. 20. *Behold I come quickly. Yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry*, Heb. 10. 37. It is but a little time to the day of Chriſt's Appearing;

pearing; compared with the time that is run out, ſince the beginning of the World, it will be quickly, conſidering how near our end is, and that Death is at hand. Death is the end of the World to us; we paſs into a fixed, unchangeable, Eternal Eſtate, as thoſe do who live to the end of the World. Time is folded up to us, and the Door of Eternity is opened to us. Chriſt's coming to call us out of the World, and to Summon us to his Judgment Seat, may quickly be; it may be within a few Years, yea, within a few Months, yea, within a few Days. That which is future will come, and be preſent; and our Souls ſhould be affected now, as if we ſaw the Judge appearing, the Throne ſet, the Books opened, and our ſelves Preſented before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt.

2. This Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt will be ſudden, ſurprizing, and very amazing to the greateſt part of the World, as the Old World was, drowned in Senſual Pleaſures, Earthly Buſineſs, Carnal Security. They were poyſoned with, and hardened in unbelief; they did not look for the Flood, they *knew not till it came and took them all away*, Matt. 24. 39. They did not believe God's threatning, or regard *Noah*'s preaching and warnings, or conſider what the building of the Ark did mean; they would not know things by Be-

lieving, but only by Seeing and Feeling. They did not know till the Rain did fall, the Fountains of the great Deep were broken up, and the Waters did rise to swallow them up; so *shall the coming of the Son of Man be*, Rev. 16. 15. The World will not believe, or prepare for it, till they see Christ coming in the Clouds; he will as to most, *come as a Thief in the Night*, that is not thought of, or looked for, *Rev.* 3. 3. The World is as loose, as careless, as secure, as if they had heard nothing of Christ's coming, as if they had not been informed of his appearing, or been exhorted to look and wait for it, and been warned to prepare for it; the evil Servant saith no more, *but my Lord delayeth his coming*, Matt. 24. 48. Tho' yet he acts, and carries it, as if he would never come at all, Christ's Appearing will come as a Snare on them that dwell on the Earth, *Luke* 21. 35. Tho' they have often been taught, and told, that Jesus Christ will come, yet they will be as stupid, and senseless, and foolish, as the Birds and Beasts; they will take no warning, but will fall into the Snare, as a Bird doth, and be utterly ruined and destroyed by Christ's second coming. Tho' Christ doth bring Grace, and Glory to others, yet he will totally take away all Good, all that is sweet and comfortable, from impenitent Sinners. Men are wofully degenerate, that they will not know

things by Faith, or the Teſtimony of the Word of God, but only by Senſe, and ſo will not diſcern dreadful Evils till they fall upon them.

3. Jeſus Chriſt will be Revealed in great Glory, and *ſit upon the Throne of his Glory*, Matt. 25. 31. He will alſo cauſe his Redeemed to appear in glory, *Col.* 3. 4. Our Saviour comes not only to be glorified himſelf, *but to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe*, 2 Theſ. 1. 10. therefore it is ſtiled, *The glorious Appearing* of the *great God*, even of *our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, Titus 2. 13. Chriſt at his coming will be clothed with ſuch glory, that will put it out of doubt that he is the Son of God, that he is the Son of Man, the true Meſſiah that was promiſed and exhibited to the World: It is ſaid, *Then ſhall appear the Sign of the Son of Man*, Matt. 24. 30. *Ferus* takes this Sign of the Son of Man to be the Sign of the Croſs, but the Note of *Calvin* on the Text is more ſolid and judicious. He takes that eminent and tranſcendent Glory, that Chriſt will appear in, to be the Sign of the Son of Man. Thoſe that were not convinced, and perſwaded, by all the Signs and Miracles that Chriſt wrought, that he was the Meſſiah, ſhall, by his glorious Appearing, by his Illuſtrious Majeſty, as a demonſtrative, and convincing Sign, be aſſured fully, that he is the Son of

Man, the Promiſed Meſſiah: None ſhall doubt, none ſhall be left at uncertainties about it, no Unbeliever ſhall remain. Tho' the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* would not regard Chriſt's Miracles, or be induced by them to believe, yet he tells them of an invincible convincing evidence, that ſhould one day be afforded to them, but too late. He inſiſts on, and minds them of this very ſign of the Son of Man, *Matt.* 6. 64. *Hereafter you ſhall ſee the Son of man ſitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven.* You that now condemn me, for ſaying that I am the Meſſiah, and the Son of God, ſhall one day ſee me as a Judge, coming to Arraign, Sentence, and Condemn you.

4. *The coming of Chriſt will be very open, and evident to the whole World.* When he firſt appeared, he ſhewed himſelf to few but to the *Jewiſh* Nation. After his Reſurrection, we read of none of the unbelieving World that beheld him. He appeared only to, and was ſeen by none, but by his Diſciples, who were to inform the World of this truth, that he was raiſed. The unbelieving *Jews* and *Gentiles*, were not to ſee Chriſt's raiſed, and glorified Body, but to believe his Reſurrection; but Chriſt will ſo openly at laſt appear, *that every eye ſhall ſee him*, Rev. 1. 7. They alſo that pierced him ſhall behold him; *Jews* and *Gentiles*, *Heathens* and *Mahumetans*, *Looſe* and

Prophane

Prophane Christians, shall see him. Believers and Saints shall then point him out with joy, *Lo this is our God, we have waited for him*, Is. 25. 9. *And he hath not deceived our Faith, or frustrated our Hope and Expectation.* They that would not believe what they did not see, shall now see, but to their terror. They that were averse from the Life of Faith, and wholly devoted to the Life of Sense, shall now have Seeing enough; they shall behold what will affright, dismay, and overwhelm them. God doth now require, and call for a high and noble Exercise of Faith, in relation to invisible things (at which the Heathen of Old scoffed); yet he doth, and will condescend, to give evidence and satisfaction, as at Christ's first appearing, he was visible to the eye of the Body, *Is.* 40. 9. O Zion, *that bringest glad tidings, lift up thy voice*, and *be not afraid*; *say unto the Cities of* Judah, *Behold your God.* This was a strange and wonderful truth, and *Zion* might be afraid to publish it; yet she is twice bid to lift up her voice, and that with strength, not to be afraid aloud to sound out, and proclaim this amazing, and astonishing truth: Say to the Cities of *Judah*, Behold your God, behold God is come down to you in a Humane Nature, God is walking among you in a Body of Flesh, preaching, working Miracles, familiarly conversing with you. *The Word was made flesh, and dwelt*

among us, and we beheld his Glory, John 1. 14. So at his second coming, Christ will be evident to the eye, and, as it were, pointed out by the Finger of Men: *Behold he cometh in the clouds, and every eye shall see him*, Rev. 1. 7. Saints shall say to those that have upbraided them with the invisible object of their Faith, *Lo this is our God, we have waited for him*, Is. 25. 9. Tho' the unbelieving World did Reproach Christians, and say, *Where is your God*, yet Saints one day confute all their Calumnies, and silence all their Insultings and Upbraidings; they shall point out Christ coming in all his Majesty and Glory, and say, *Lo this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us*, and *we will be glad and rejoyce in his salvation*, Is. 25. 9.

5. This Revelation of Christ will cause Mourning to the greatest part of the World; it will be a black, bitter, terrible day to most, *Matt.* 24. 30. All the Tribes of the Earth shall mourn, all the Kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of him, *Rev.* 1. 7. when they shall see the Son of Man coming in the Clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory. They shall mourn when it is too late to repent; they shall wail when their sorrow will not prevent, but begin their Punishment and Hell. Now they shall, to their cost, know how great a Person they have refused, and how high an Happiness they have rejected; that they have

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turned from a *Saviour*, and ſo forfeited true Bleſſedneſs; and rebelled againſt the great God, and ſo have incurred the *worſt* and *ſevereſt* penalties. Theſe three things ſhall be reviewed and reflected on, 1. What they have done. 2. What they have loſt. 3. What they muſt ſuffer and endure to Eternity, when they ſhall bleed by the edge of God's Sword, and ſmart under the Chaſtiſement of the Scorpions of Revenging Juſtice, 1. Sinners that conſider what they have done, that they have turned away from him that ſpake out of the boſom of his Fathers love, and from the Throne of his own glory, *Pſ.* 81. 11. That they would have none of him who is the true God, and eternal Life; that they ſtopped their Ears, and hardned their Hearts againſt the wooings of the beſt Bridegroom, againſt the call of the great Shepherd, and of the Captain of Salvation, againſt the intreaties of a Saviour and Redeemer. They will now reflect on the frequent denials they gave to, and the many affronts they put upon the Lord of Glory; how they hated and abhorred his Yoke, deſpiſed and loathed his Feaſt; did not ſubmit to, and come into his Righteouſneſs, but rebelled, reſiſted, vexed, and quenched the holy Spirit of God. 2. They ſhall know now what they have loſt; that the Treaſury of Grace will now be locked, the Fountain of Life ſealed, the bowels of Chriſt will be for ever ſhut

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againſt them, notwithſtanding their extream poverty and miſery. The door of God's Houſe will be ſhut, never to be opened again: How woful will this be, to be excluded out of God's Palace, and to be thruſt out of his Kingdom? They that ſhould have uſed violence to preſs into God's Kingdom, but now Chriſt will uſe force to thruſt them out of his Kingdom. They wiſh now to ſee the excellency and glory of the Kingdom of God, that they would even, with violence, force into it, but they ſhall be violently thruſt out of it, they ſhall never taſt of Chriſt's Supper. They would not come into Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, and this was their great ſin; and they ſhall not come into Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, and this will be their grievous puniſhment. They ſhall not enter into God's reſt, *Heb.* 3.18. They ſhall not partake of Chriſt's joy or glory: They would not open their Hearts to Chriſt, and Chriſt will not open his Heaven to them. They would not know Chriſt's voice, when he knocked and called, ſaying, *Open to me*: And Chriſt will not hear their voice, when they cry, *Lord, open to us.* They would not give entertainment and reſt to Chriſt in their Souls, and Chriſt will not give them entertainment and reſt in his Kingdom.

3. This will cauſe wailing, when Sinners ſee what they muſt ſuffer and endure; they that in their whole *time did drink iniquity like water,*

water, muſt, during God's eternity, drink the wrath of the Almighty, *Job* 21.20. They muſt be drunk with the Cup of God's fury, feel the edge of his glittering Sword, and the weight of his puniſhing hand. His face will be unveiled to frown and ſcorch, and his arm be made bare to ſmite and wound. Chriſt will come to expreſs his moſt fierce reſentments of Sinners ſlighting the Grace offered to 'em, and deſpiſing the mercy preſſed on them. Children of Diſobedience ſhall be broken with Chriſt's Iron rod, and Veſſels of wrath ſhall be filled up to the brim with the fury of God. This Mourning will be dreadful, becauſe there is no comfort to be adminiſtred; no peace to be ſpoken to theſe Mourners. There will be no baniſhing of their fears, removing of their burdens, no ſweetning of their cup, or healing of their wounds, for ever. God will ſet his face againſt them, and will never hide, or turn away his angry countenance from them. Thoſe that have been ſecure, ſtupid, hard-hearted, even till now, ſhall then begin to mourn, but the firſt fruits of their ſorrow will be the firſt fruits of their woe, and prove the earneſt, and preſages of their eternal miſery. They begin to ſorrow on the utmoſt confines and bounds of Time, and muſt continue ſorrowing to an endleſs and unbounded Eternity. Godly ſorrow for ſin may ſomewhat avail to remove the Tranſgreſſor's burden; but Worldly ſorrow,

row, under the feeling of present anguish, or the fear of further, future, approaching misery, will not advantage Sinners to roul away their guilt, to prevent or diminish their punishment, their mourning is a part of the punishment threatned, *Prov.*5.11,12. *and thou mourn at last, and say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof?* Therefore this punishment shall never cease, shall never be taken off. Saints have but days of mourning, and these shall have an end, *Is.*60.20. but Sinners shall have an eternal mourning, which shall have no end. The day of Christ's Revelation will be a time of joy to his Loyal Spouse, to his Living Members, to his Faithful and Sincere Servants; when he appeareth, they shall rejoyce with exceeding great joy, 1*Pet.*4.13. But this appearing will cause eternal sorrow to Rebels and Enemies, when their sins shall be remembred and revenged.

3. When will the Lord Jesus be Revealed? Tho' the end of the Old World, and the punctual time of its destruction was foretold, that after a hundred and twenty Years the Flood should come, yet the exact day or time of the end of the second World none knows, no not the Angels of God, *Matt.*24.36. yet the Scripture gives us some general hints, and intimations, when Christ will come. 1. When he hath received a Kingdom, *Luke* 19.12. He was to travel into a far Country to receive a King-

Kingdom, and to return. Jeſus Chriſt hath not yet fully received his Kingdom, all the Elect are not yet born, they are not all gathered and converted, they have not all yet viſited the Son, *Pſal.* 2.12. performed their homage, and yielded obedience to him. It is a Work for a long time for Chriſt to ride forth proſperouſly, conquer a Kingdom, and ſubject Rebels to himſelf, and then to reign proſperouſly over them, *Jer.* 23.5. more to refine, ſanctify, and fit them for himſelf. All Chriſts Servants muſt have time to occupy, and trade with his Pounds and Talents, before he will come, call them to an account, and reckon with them, *Matt.* 25.16,19. Chriſt muſt wound the hearts of his Enemies, and cauſe them, as foiled, to fall under him, and as worſhippers to fall before him. Chriſt muſt alſo ſhew his glorious power for ſome time, in ruling in the midſt of his enemies, *Pſ.* 110.2. 2. That notwithſtanding all their rage, they cannot hinder Chriſt's Kingdom to riſe, or cauſe it to fall, but Chriſt will go on more Levening the World with his Doctrine, more ſubduing the Nations by his Word, till this ſtone did fill the whole Earth, and the Name of this Shepherd was great to the ends of the Earth.

2. Jeſus Chriſt will come, when all his Members are compleat, and he hath the fulneſs of his Body, *Epheſ.* 1.23. When his Spouſe hath made her ſelf ready, *Rev.* 19.7. *The mar-*

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riage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made her self ready. When she is cloathed in fine Linnen, white and clean, and adorned with Clothing of wrought Gold, and Raiment of Needle-work.

3. Jesus Christ will come, when he hath prepared a place to lead and bring his people to, *John* 14.3. *If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to my self, that where I am you may be.* But when may Christ be said to have prepared a place for all his Members? Surely when Christ hath sprinkled the Throne, and the Heavenly Sanctuary with his Blood, when he hath pleaded his Sufferings and Death for each of them, that they may be let into the glorious Presence and Kingdom of God, then he may be said to have prepared a place for them.

4. When Christ's Corn and Harvest is fully ripe, then he will come to reap, *Mark* 4.28,29. When *the earth bringeth forth the blade, then the ear, then the full Corn in the ear; but when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.* Christ will not delay, or lose time, when the Harvest is ripe, when the Members are grown up *to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*, Eph.4.13.

2. Jesus Christ will be Revealed from Heaven, 1. To justifie the History and Doctrine of the Gospel, that *he was received up into Heaven,*

ven, and ſat on the right hand of God, Mark 16. 19. That *he entred into Heaven, Angels, Principalities and Powers, being made ſubject to him,* 1 Pet. 3.22. *that he was received up into glory.*

2. To anſwer the hopes and expectation of his People, they wait for a Saviour from Heaven, *Pſal.* 3.20. and look for God's Son Jeſus from Heaven, 1 *Theſ.* 1.10.

3. Chriſt will be Revealed from Heaven, to ſhew the Spiritual Nature of his Kingdom, that it is a heavenly Kingdom; That he hath had his Throne in Heaven, and from thence his Kingdom hath ruled over all. He hath obſerved all the rage and actings of his enemies, and all the love and obedience of his friends. He hath inſpected all the concerns of his Members, and tranſacted all the affairs of his Kingdom. This hath been honorable and glorious to Chriſt, that he hath had a reſt, *Iſ.* 11.10. in Heaven, and yet neglected none of his work in repreſſing the rage of his enemies, and in reviving the fainting ſpirits of his friends, and ſteering all the affairs of his Church to a ſafe and happy Port. He hath ſupplied his poor, and ſupported his weak Members.

4. Jeſus Chriſt will be Revealed from Heaven, for the greater confuſion and terror of his Enemies. How will this affright and amaze them, that he, who they thought ſlept under the clods of the Earth, ſhould appear riding on the clouds of Heaven, *Rev.* 1.7. that he,

he, who the *Jews* thought was ſuffering in Hell, for deluding and deceiving the World, ſhould come to Judge the World, and to Condemn Men to Hell, for not believing on him, *Mark* 6.16. *Joſeph* was thought by his Brethren to be loſt, or dead, but how were they confounded and troubled, when they found him alive, *Gen.*45.3. heard him ſpeaking to them, ſaw him under *Pharaoh* Ruling over all the Land of *Egypt*: So how will it diſmay, and overwhelm the unbelieving World, when Chriſt that was thought to remain dead ſhall be preſented to their eyes as alive? When he that was ill treated by Men in the form of a Servant, ſhall appear in the glory of a Lord, to judge both the Quick and the Dead, and ſhall be manifeſted as having all Power in Heaven and Earth committed to him, and can juſtifie and crown thoſe that have believed on him; and condemn and puniſh thoſe that have rebelled againſt him, who neither have believed his Doctrine, or obeyed his Commands.

USE of Examination. *Examine your ſelves under what Notion Chriſt will be Revealed, and come to you at laſt. Whether he will appear as your Friend, or as your Enemy; To your joy or ſorrow: As a loving Bridegroom to receive you to himſelf,* John 14. 3. *Or as an incenſed Judge to Sentence and Caſt you from himſelf, ſaying,* Go ye curſed into everlaſting fire, *Matt.*25.41. Will

Will Christ come to give you any thing? Will he bestow *a Crown of Righteousness?* 2 Tim. 4.18. *A Crown of Life*, Rev. 2.10. Will he call you to inherit an everlasting Kingdom? *Matt.* 25.34. Or will Christ come upon you *as a Thief in the Night*, to impoverish, spoil, deprive you of all the good things you now possess and enjoy? Will not your Cisterns then be broken, your Candles and Lamps be put out? Will not your whole Paradise of sensual and sinful delights be blighted and blasted? Will not Creatures be withdrawn from you, and God himself also depart? *The floor and the Wine-press shall not feed you, and God himself will leave and forsake you*, Hos. 9.2, 12. Will you not at once be turned out of your Stewardship, and also be cut off from all hope of the heavenly Inheritance? Will not Christ's coming be your utter undoing? Will you not sustain a damage and loss never to be repaired? For your wooing and buying time will be over; the Spiritual Market will be at an end. Will it not be sad, when others are rich Heirs, for you to be poor Bankrupts, emptied and stript of all valuable and desirable good for ever? Inquire therefore seriously and diligently, how it stands with you, in relation to Christ's coming. Is Jesus Christ Revealed in you, and to you; and is his new Nature formed in you? *It is not Flesh and Blood, but our Father that is in heaven, that must reveal Christ to us*, Matt. 16.17.

he that hath heard, and learned of the Father, comes to the Son. Hath the ſpirit ever glorified Chriſt in your eyes? Is he moſt precious to you? If Chriſt be not Revealed to you while you are on Earth, he cannot be Revealed from Heaven, to your joy and comfort. Have you an underſtanding to know the worth, excellency, and precioufneſs of Chriſt, ſo that you give your ſelves to him, and are in him? If Chriſt do dwell in your hearts below, you may be aſſured that you ſhall dwell in his Houſe above. Are you related to Chriſt? Are you really his? *Gal.* 5.24. *They that are Chriſt's have crucified the fleſh.* They that are Chriſts ſhall *be made alive at his coming*, 1 Cor. 15.23. Is the Match made up between Chriſt and you, by a mutual Spiritual kiſs? Doth Chriſt kiſs you, expreſſing his fervent love towards you, and ſpeaking powerfully and effectually to you the Doctrine of Grace, the Word of Reconciliation? The Goſpel of Salvation is your own Intereſt in Chriſt's precious Promiſes, ſealed and delivered to you.

2. Do you kiſs Chriſt the Son of God? *Pſ.* 2.12. *Cant.* 8.1. *When I ſhould find thee without I would kiſs thee.* And *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, are ſaid to ſalute, kiſs, or embrace the Promiſes, *ἀσπασάμενοι*. Where the mouth of Faith doth meet, with the mouth of Chriſt ſpeaking the Word of Life, and the promiſes of Spiritual Benefits, is perſwaded of them, doth embrace them,

them; then the Soul kisses Christ. There is also a kiss of Homage, as *Samuel* kissed *Saul*, acknowledging him as the Lord's Anointed. When we receive the Law from Christ's mouth, and profess our subjection to his Scepter, and obedience to his Laws, then we kiss Christ. 3. Are you willing that Christ should come? Do you desire, long for, and love Christ's appearing? The Church saith, *Make haste my beloved*, Cant. 8. 14. When Christ said, *I come quickly*, she adds her *Amen*; *Even so come Lord Jesus*, Rev. 22. 20. Christians are said not only to look for, but to hasten the coming of the day of God, 2 *Pet.* 3. 12. σπεύδοντας: that is, by their wishings, longings, earnest desires. Do you fervently love the appearing of Christ, as that which will be exceeding honorable to him, comfortable and beneficial to you? Do you love Christ's appearing, as that which will be exceeding glorious to him? For by his voice he shall quicken, raise, call forth all that are in their Graves, *John* 5. 28. That Christ knows all that ever lived, can distinguish their dust from the dust of one another, and from the dust of the Earth: That he knows all their thoughts, words and actions, remembers them, and will call them to an account for them, 1 *Pet.* 4. 5. Then Christ will sit on the Throne of his glory, and all Nations shall be gathered before him, to be judged by by him. This is the perfection of Christ's

Kingdom, and his higheſt act of Royalty, to ſentence all Men to their eternal ſtate: It is ſaid he ſhall *judge the quick and dead* at his Appearing and Kingdom. Now is his Kingdom moſt highly magnified and exalted, when the *quick and dead* muſt be Judged by him.

2. This appearing of Chriſt will be moſt comfortable to his People; he will come to beſtow Crowns, to give Rewards, to divide eternal Portions and Inheritances to them. He comes with the Keys of Hell and Death in his Hand: He hath the Key of Hell to ſhut it, that the Souls of his People may not enter in, elſe the mouth of the bottomleſs Pit, and of the roaring Lion, would gape for them, and ſwallow them up. And Chriſt hath the Key of Death to open the Graves, that the Bodies of Saints may come forth. May not Chriſtians well love the appearing of Chriſt, who hath delivered them from the wrath to come, and as a Captain of Salvation will lead them to glory? Do you long for Chriſt's coming, as that which will be a Harveſt-day, a Marriage-day, and a day of full Redemption? Or are you averſe from Chriſt's coming? Do you not loath and dread the thoughts of it? Is not Chriſt's coming full ſore againſt your Will? There is a vaſt difference between theſe two expreſſions; the breaking up the Houſe, and the opening of the door to Jeſus Chriſt,

Luke

Luke 12.36. The House of a carnal unbelieving Man is broken through; Christ breaks in upon him irresistibly, unavoidably: a force is put upon Sinners. If they could Fetter Christ's feet, obstruct his way, clog and stop his Chariot-wheels, Christ should never come or be Revealed; but Saints that hang their hopes, and put all their happiness in Christ's Appearing, do readily open the door, and joyfully will come and entertain Christ. Do you look for his coming, as a beloved Bridegroom, as a desired Guest? Or do you not mind, or desire Christ's coming, but will be as much surprized by it, and astonished at it, as at the coming of a Thief, that was not thought of at all?

4. Do you prepare, and make ready for Christ's coming? Is all your Week day of life nothing but a preparation for the eternal Sabbath? Are your Loines girded, that you may do the Work of your heavenly Calling? Are your Lamps burning, that you may do your Work skilfully and diligently? Persevere in it continually. It is said of the good Woman, *that her Candle goeth not out by night*, Prov. 31.18. Do your Candles continue burning through this dark night of Time? Others have put out their light, and given themselves up to sloth and sleep. It is a great thing to watch, and keep our Garments on and about us, *Rev.* 16.15. *Blessed is he that watcheth, and*

keepeth his Garments. Christ may suddenly come, and surprize Sinners, that they may not have time to put on Spiritual Garments, to *put on Christ*, Rom. 13. 14. *and the new man*, Ephes. 4. 24. We are too apt to put off our Coat, *Cant.* 5. 3. to lay aside a gracious, spiritual holy, and heavenly frame, and to give way to sloth, sleep, and carnal security. This Spiritual Garment is soon put off, but it is hardly recovered. I have put off my Coat, and how shall I put it on? It is highly commendable to have our Lamps burning, when the Candles of others are put out; and it is a Night of gross and thick darkness with them. It is to the Honour of Christ the Bridegroom to be expected, waited for, and to be lighted to his Fathers House, with bright and burning Lamps, with Graces active, and in a most vigorous and lively Exercise. Is this Night-Light of Time, as a Passeover Night to you? *Are your Loins girded? Are your Shoes on your Feet?* The Feet of the Church are said to be beautiful with Shoes; she was fit to Journy, to Travel. Are you waiting for God's Call out of the *Egypt* of this World? Are you fitted, and ready to Travel hence into the Heavenly *Canaan*? Christ saith, *Come with me my Spouse, with me from* Lebanon: Are you willing and ready to follow Jesus Christ? Are you like Servants, that look for the return of their Lord from the Wedding Feast, to

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have you a way as Guests to his Table in his Heavenly Kingdom? *Luke* 22.29,30. There is much in these words, *And be you like such as look for the return of your Lord*, Luke 12.36. The watchfulness, diligence, the constant labour, activity and zeal of some Christians, doth evidence to themselves, and demonstrate to others, that they look for the coming of Christ: That they prepare, make ready, set all things in order, for their receiving and entertaining of the Lord Jesus. Their great care and endeavour is, that they may not be found sleeping and undressed; that they may not walk naked, and their shame be seen for ever, *Prov.*16.15. It will be the greatest reproach, to have had a long time to adorn the Soul allowed to Men, and yet to neglect and trifle it away, and their Souls to be found dead without the life of God, and to be found naked without the Image and Righteousness of God. Do you trim your Lamps, dress your Souls, and finish the Work which God hath given you to do, and that Christ hath appointed you, that you may open to Christ immediately, without put offs, or delays, or excuses, as those that are not surprized or unready, as those that would stay here no longer, that would have Time end, and Eternity begin? As those that would have shadows fly away, and the everlasting day to dawn? These are great words, that Christ will knock

for a full entrance into us, and a total poſ ſeſſion of us; and we muſt open immediately as thoſe that are ready to let Chriſt in, and to go away preſently with him: But are you not rather minding earthly things, ſcattering your ways and affections to unlawful Beloveds? Do not your thoughts creep on the ground, and your Hearts dwell below? Would you not ſtay in a Natural Body? Would you not continue in, and be contented with a Stewardſhip? Would you not dwell on Earth? Do you not eagerly drive the Chariot of your Trade? Do you not indulge your Carnal Affections, and give the Reins to your Senſual Appetites? So that there is no evidence that you look for Chriſt's Appearing; for you are not like thoſe that wait for the return of Chriſt from Heaven.

3. With what Attendance Jeſus Chriſt will come from Heaven? What Retinue will accompany him? He will be Revealed with his mighty Angels. How much doth the firſt and ſecond coming of Chriſt differ? He came firſt attended with weak Fiſhermen, but now he is ſurrounded and compaſſed with mighty Angels to wait on him. Two things are here obſervable, 1. That the Angels are called Chriſt's Angels. 2. That they are Stiled mighty Angels. 1. The Angels are ſaid to be the Angels of the Lord Jeſus. This is an high Honour to Chriſt that

all the Angels of Heaven are his Angels; He is Captain of God's Militia, and General of all the Hosts of Heaven. They are Ministers to attend on him, and his; and Hosts to fight against his, and his Churches enemies. And well they may be called his Angels, for he made them; *they were created by him*, Col. 1. 16,17. *and for him*; *and by him they do subsist*, and have their Being upheld and continued to them, else they would cease to be, and return to nothing. 2. God therefore called the Angels to worship his Son made Flesh, come into the World in our Nature. When he brought the first begotten into the World, he saith, *Let all the Angels of God worship him*, Heb. 1. 6. It may be inquired whether they do not owe the Son of God adoration, on the account of their being graciously supported, and preserved in their Integrity. The two Cherubims that figured the Angels, were made out of the Mercy-Seat, as well as stood upon it, *Exod.* 25. 18,19. There are Elect Angels, 1 *Tim.* 5. 21. as well as Elect Men. Herein did the various and manifold Wisdom of God shine, *Ephes.* 3. 10. in keeping Elect Angels standing, and in raising up Elect Men when they are fallen. 3. The Angels Ministred to Christ, and probably brought him Food, after the Devil had tempted him, taking occasion from his hunger. And an Angel came from Heaven, and strengthned Christ

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in his Agony, *Luke* 22. 43. 4. Jesus Christ is the Ladder, that joins Earth and Heaven together, and it is on this Ladder the Angels of God ascend, and descend, *John* 1. 51. All Correspondence, all Commerce, and Communion, between the upper and lower World, is carried on by this Ladder. The Angels descend to serve the Members of Christ, and then ascend to give an Account of the faithful discharge of their Office and Trust.

2. These Angels are called mighty Angels. And it is a great and mighty Work they are to undertake and execute; there is a multitude of Malefactors to be Arrested; there are great and mighty Enemies to be Apprehended; there is a great and mighty Harvest to be cut down, to be reaped, and separated from the Field of the Church: There are Goats to be separated from the Sheep, and bad Fish to be taken out from among the good. The Angels shall come forth to honour Christ, Heaven shall be emptied of Angels and Saints, to wait on Christ. The Angels, when they come forth, shall sever the Wicked from among the Just; the Harvest is the end of the World, the Wicked are the Tares, and the Reapers are the Angels, *Matt.* 13: 38, 39. Sinful Men and Women are as weak and feeble Tares, they cannot stand against, or before the Hook of these mighty Reapers, they shall be easily cut, they shall quickly

quickly fall before a sharp hook managed by such mighty Arms. The far greatest part of the World will be found Tares, therefore there needs many mighty Reapers to cut down so vast a Harvest; and skill will be requisite to discern and distinguish some of the Tares, some close and refined Hipocrites, from the good Corn. 2. They are to bind the Tares fast in bundles, *Matt.* 13. 30. that they shall none of them escape. He that had not a Wedding Garment was to be bound hand and foot, *Matt.* 22. 13. His hands were to be bound, that he should not fight or resist; his feet were bound, that he should not fly or run away. 3. These Angels are as mighty Sergeants, to present Malefactors to the Judge. As for *those mine enemies* (saith Christ) *which would not that I should reign over them, bring them before me*, Luke 19. 27. The Angels are to execute this Order, and fulfil this Command: They are to present Criminals at the Bar of the Judge. 4. When Christ doth Sentence and Condemn wicked Men, the Angels are ready to execute the Sentence; They gather those that offend and commit iniquity; they pluck out the bad Fish, and cast them into a Furnace of unquenchable fire, *Matt.* 13 40, 50. Christ saith of his enemies, *Let them be slain in my presence*, Luke 14. 27. These condemned Malefactors may be said to be slain by the Angels, when they cast them into the Furnace; for

then

then all this ſweet, pleaſant, and deſireable Life and Being, is conſumed and gone, thoſe are no better than woful, ſtinking Carkaſſes, that muſt be Food to the Worm that never dies, and fuel to the Fire that never goes out, *Iſ.* 66. 24. 5. The Angels are to gather the Elect: It is ſaid that Chriſt ſhall ſend forth his Angels with a great ſound of a Trumpet, and ſhall gather his Elect from the four Winds, and from one end of Heaven to the other. Obſerve, 1. That the Elect are called Chriſt's Elect, he chuſes as well as the Father; the Lamb hath his Book of Life, *Rev.* 13.8. Thoſe that the Father gives him, the Names of thoſe he writes down in his Book. Theſe Chriſt chuſes to redeem, reconcile, and ſatisfie for: With the Salvation of theſe he charges himſelf. Theſe he muſt bring to his Fold, and they ſhall hear his voice, *John* 10. 16. Theſe he muſt keep, and loſe none of them, *John* 17. 1. 2. The Angels are to gather theſe, as a *Spouſe to Chriſt her Husband*, Pſ. 45. 14, 15. with joy ſhall ſhe be brought in Raiment of Needle-work to the King: The Virgins her Companions ſhall be brought, they ſhall enter into the Kings Palace. When *Abraham* imploy'd his Servant to fetch a Wife out of *Padan Aram* for *Iſaac* his Son, he ſaid the Lord God of Heaven ſhould ſend his Angel before his Servant, and he ſhould take thence a Wife for his Son, *Gen.* 24. 7. As an Angel was imploy'd to proſ-

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per the Work and Way of *Abraham's* Servant, and to bring a Wife to *Isaac*: ſo the Angels of God ſhall bring, and preſent Chriſt's Wife to him; they ſhall know who are the Elect, find them out, and diſtinguiſh them from others. 2. They ſhall gather the Elect as Members to their Head, as Loyal Subjects to their King, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 1. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks of the coming of the Lord Jeſus as a moſt deſirable thing, and the gathering of the Elect to him as a moſt ſweet, and comfortable thing; and the Angels ſhall do this Work to gather Saints to Chriſt.

USE. *We may learn from the Attendance of Chriſt, what Honour ſhall be put on Chriſt at his Appearing.*

Heaven ſhall be emptied of the Angels and glorified Saints to follow *Chriſt*; the Graves ſhall be emptied of the dead Bodies of the Saints to meet *Chriſt*. 1 Theſ. 4. 14. *Thoſe that ſleep in Jeſus, ſhall God bring with him.* They ſhall be brought from death to life, to be preſented to Jeſus Chriſt. Chriſt ſhall come in his own Glory, as he is the Son of God; and *thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, Luke 9. 26. And he ſhall come in the Fathers glory; that is, he ſhall come in that Glory the Father hath put on him, as his Righteous Servant. *Phil.* 2. 10, 11. *God hath exalted Chriſt, and given him a Name above every Name, that at the Name of Chriſt every knee ſhould bow, and every tongue*

ſhould

should confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. The Father is glorified in the glory of Christ. And it is further said, *Luke* 9.26. *That he shall come in the glory of the holy Angels.* They shall be Christ's Servitors, shall attend on his Nod, and wait at his beck, and be ready to fulfil his pleasure. And what terror may this truth speak to the wicked, that mighty Angels shall be Reapers to cut them down, and execute the Sentence of Christ upon them? And what comfort may this truth administer to the Godly, that mighty Angels shall gather them to Christ? They shall not miscarry, because the Angels shall find them out and present them to Christ, as those that will be justified by him, and enjoy communion with him. 4. In what manner will Christ appear? It is said in a flame of fire. Our Translators render it, in flaming fire. Christ's coming will be terrible to the Unbelieving World; his frowning Face will then be unveiled, his punishing Arm will then be made bare. His fury will then come up into his Face, *Ezek.* 38.18. Long meekness and patience will end in severity. Sinners do weary out the patience and Long-Suffering of God, that he can bear no more, no longer, *Jer.* 44.22. He is even weary of repenting, *Jer.* 15.6. because Sinners are not weary of sinning.

Doct. 4. *Christ will be Revealed in flaming fire.*

1. That he will be so Revealed in flaming fire.

2. The

2. The *Cauſes* of it. 3. The *dreadful Effects* of it.

1. That the Lord Chriſt will be Revealed in flaming fire. 1. His *eyes will be as a flame of fire*, Rev. 1.14. to diſcern and diſcover the moſt ſecret wickedneſſes, and the hidden things of darkneſs, *Eccl.* 12.14. *He will come burning with anger, his lips will be full of indignation, and his tongue as a conſuming fire*, Iſ. 30. 27,28. He will ſpeak to Sinners in his anger, and vex them in his ſore diſpleaſure; he will ſpeak hot, burning devouring words. *Let them be ſlain in my preſence*, Pſ. 2.5. *Depart ye curſed into everlaſting fire.* In this Sentence his Tongue is like conſuming fire. *Behold the Lord will come with fire, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire*, Iſ. 66.15. His Throne will be like the fiery flame, and his Wheels as the burning fire. Chriſt's Throne hath Wheels of Fire, to purſue fugitive and guilty Offenders. 4. From this Throne a fiery ſtream iſſueth, and cometh forth to puniſh the Wicked; as from the Throne of God, and the Lamb, a pure *River of Water of Life* proceeded, clear as Chryſtal, to refreſh the Saints. As the ſame Sun, at the ſame time, ſcorches ſome parts of the World, and revives and chears other parts with his more benign beams and rays, the Heaven of the Bleſſed, and the Hell of the Damned, will come from the ſame face of God, as ſmiling, or as frowning, *Pſ.* 16. laſt.

2. Why will Chriſt come in flaming fire?

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It is becauſe his abuſed Grace is turned into fury; he knocked, but Sinners would not open to him. They have ſhut out Righteouſneſs, Salvation, and Eternal Life, from themſelves; and they have detained Sin, Satan, and Death, and ſhut them into their own Souls. Chriſt called, but they would not anſwer; he ſtretched out his hands full of Gifts, and Spiritual Bleſſings, and no Man regarded. They would not come to Chriſt, that they might have life, *John* 5.40. They would not be gathered under his Wings, that they might have ſafety. They would not enter into his Fold, that they might be ſaved; go out and in, and find Paſture. They would not repair to his Houſe, that they might find reſt; or preſs into his Kingdom, that they might obtain a ſatisfying Feaſt at his Table, and an eternal Glory in his Throne. They would not kiſs the Son with a kiſs of Faithful Homage and Obedience, therefore he becomes angry; yea, his anger riſeth up to fury, and breaks forth as Fire, ſo that there is no quenching of it. Sinners have been loading Chriſt with contempt, affronts, provocations, all their days: They have been Treaſuring up Wrath, [illegible] hath long been a gathering; Offenders have long been bringing Fuel to the Fire during their whole time, and God will be blowing it up during his Eternity. They thought Chriſt did not ſee, or obſerve their Iniquities; that he would

would not resent, and could not punish their Transgressions: But Christ comes now in flaming fire to shew the height of his anger, his fixed purpose to punish, and his power to revenge. As God turned Fallen *Adam* out of the Earthly Paradise, a second *Adam* comes in a *flame of Fire*, to exclude Unbelievers, and Impenitent Sinners, from the *Heavenly Paradise*.

3. Consider the dreadful effects of this *flaming Fire*; it will break forth, and take hold of the Creatures, and kindle a Conflagration both in the upper and lower World. *The Heavens shall pass away with a noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat*; as if Metal should be melted, and distil in scalding burning drops. The Earth, and the Works of it, shall be burnt up: The Earth is the Home of the Wicked, the Creatures they have doted on, and made them as their Idol Gods. And how dreadful will this be to the Ungodly, to see their House, their Home, their Heaven, their Idol Gods, to be burnt up together? That the Creatures that were once Food to their Lusts, shall now become Fuel to the Fire of God's Anger? As the *Philistines* left their Images, their Idols, and *David* and his Men burnt them, 2 *Sam.* 5. 21. so Sinners must leave their Heaven, and all their Idol Gods below, and God will burn and consume them.

2. This Fire will not stop here; the Scripture joins the burning of Heaven and Earth,

and the Perdition of ungodly Men together. 2 Pet. 3. 7. *The heavens and the earth, that are now by the same word, are kept in store, reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men.* Shall the Traytors House be burnt, and the Traytors themselves escape? Shall the Creatures, that have been but passive Instruments of sin, be consumed? And shall the active Agents go Scot-free? Shall those that have been Pressed, forced Soldiers, suffer such hard things? And shall the Voluntiers in this wicked War against God be exempted from punishment? The Heavens and the Earth fly from the face of the Judge *sitting on his white Throne, and their place was found no more.* If the defiled Creatures could not brook or beat the *angry face of the Judge*, what shall become of the defilers of them? It is Men that have perverted and abused the Creatures, contrary to their natural inclinations and tendency, to serve their Lusts, and fight against God, therefore the most dreadful, scorching, and lasting Fire, must be their Portion and Punishment. God saith, *Deut.* 32. 22. *A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn to the lowest Hell*; it shall follow and pursue its fuel thither. God saith further, This fire *shall consume the earth and its increase.* These words may well expound the Text of *Peter*, 2 Pet. 3. 10. *That the earth, and the works of it, or therein*, that is, *its fruits and increase, shall be burnt up.* This Fire shall inflame, and

burn

burn the very Foundations of the Mountains. If ſtrong Mountains cannot withſtand this Fire, how ſhall weak Sinners reſiſt it? The ſame Fire that burns Heaven and Earth, ſhall purſue Tranſgreſſors, as its moſt proper, kindly, and perpetual Fuel. Immortal Criminals ever dying, yet never dying Sinners, ſhall be the Fuel of it, *and an eternal God ſhall blow up the flame over them*, Iſ. 30. 3. 3. This *fire* will be dreadful: For, 1. It is the Fire, this is proper to, and will go forth againſt the Enemies, *Iſ.* 26. 11. *The fire of thine enemies ſhall conſume them*; that is, the Fire that ſhall burn againſt, and prey on Enemies. So it is ſaid, *Fiery indignation ſhall devour the Adverſaries*, Heb. 10. 27. Thoſe that are the Fuel of this fire, they are ſuch as were God's Enemies in time, and will continue his Adverſaries to Eternity, and ſo be fit objects of his Fury. 2. This Fire ſhall burn to the utmoſt, it ſhall put forth its zeal to the utmoſt, ζῆλος, *Heb.* 10. 27. The zeal of Fire, *as the blackneſs of darkneſs*, Jude 13. doth terribly ſet forth the privative part of Hell; ſo the zeal of fire doth dreadfully expreſs the poſitive part. God will puniſh with the *glory of his power*, 2 Theſ. 1. 8. that is, *with his power put forth moſt gloriouſly*. Theſe expreſſions, *the zeal of fire, and the glory of God's power*, do illuſtrate one another. 3. This fire it will torment, but it will never refine. Never was, nor can any be brought to *repentance by the fire of Hell*. Sinners

will continue obſtinate in Sin, and God's heart will be hardened, his bowels be ſhut up; he will be fully reſolved to puniſh. 4. This Fire will come immediately from God and Chriſt, 1. From the *face of God*, 2 Theſ. 1. 4. ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου, *from the face of the Lord.* So they are ſaid to *fall into the hands of the living God*, Heb. 10. 31. He doth puniſh them immediately. God hath to do with them, *Ezek.* 22. 14. *Can thy hands be ſtrong, can thy heart endure in the day that I ſhall have to do with thee?* The hands of Sinners cannot be ſtrong to reſiſt or keep off puniſhment; neither can their hearts be ſtout enough to endure and ſtand under it. Can Stubble, Chaff, Tares, reſiſt a God that is *conſuming fire?* Heb. 12. 29. Chriſt will kindle this Fire, and heat the Souls of Sinners, *as an Oven.* As Satans temptations, as his ſuggeſtions, as a *Baker*, Hoſ. 7. 4, 6. and Mens own Luſts, did ſinfully *heat this Oven*, ſo Chriſt's wrath will, in a way of Righteous puniſhment, heat it. It is ſaid of Chriſt, *Pſal.* 21. 8, 9. That *his hand ſhall find out all his enemies; his right hand ſhall find out all that hate him; thou ſhalt make them as an fiery Oven in the time of thine anger.* 5. This Fire will eat up the Adverſaries, *Heb.* 10. 27. it will be eating of *Adverſaries continually*, yet *never totally devour them.* It will be eating of them to Eternity, and *never make a full end of them.* That Fire that devoures, will alſo ſalt the Subject it preys on, that it ſhall be preſerved

to

to Eternity. Sinners are ſaid not to fall into the hand, but the *hands of God*: Both his *hands, all his power is imployed for their miſery*. As there is a puniſhing Hand, ſo there is a ſupporting Hand, to bear up the Sinner to endure torments to Eternity; Stubble and Chaff, Tares and Thorns, could never hold out as Eternal Fuel to the Fire of God's wrath, were there not an Eternal God, and an Eternal Power to ſupport the Damned. 6. Sinners ſhall be *tormented with Fire and Brimſtone in the preſence of the Lamb*, Rev. 14. 10. This anſwers thoſe words of Chriſt, *Let them be ſlain in my preſence*, Luke 19. 27. Tho' Chriſt be a Lamb, yet we read *of the wrath of the Lamb*; and that great day of his wrath will come, *Rev.* 6. 16, 17. The *Lamb will look on* the torments of the wicked, and *will not* commiſerate them, or relent in the leaſt towards them. The Lamb *will look on their torments, and will rejoice at them, and be much pleaſed with them*, Rev. 7. 14. They that neglected to *waſh their Robes white in the Blood of the Lamb*, Chriſt, in honour to himſelf, *will ſtain all his Raiment*; their *blood ſhall be ſprinkled on his Garments*, and this will render his Apparel as a Victorious Conquering Captain, glorious, *Iſ.* 63. 1. 3. Chriſt will never leſſen, or put out this Fire: It is a Fire to puniſh perverſe Rebellious Creatures, hardened and Implacable Enemies; a Fire of Jealouſie againſt Adulterous Souls.

USE 1. *This Truth may inform us how much Mens Sins, and obstinate Unbelief, doth alienate, and transform the Lord Jesus Christ: That he, that is stiled Love, should be Revealed in flaming Fire: That he, whose Office is to be a Mediator, to quench Wrath, to make Peace, should come to pour out Fury: That he, who beseeched Men to be Reconciled to God, and wooed them to be Espoused to himself, should now come to Execute Vengeance: That he that long and often did knock, and call Sinners to open to him, should now rise up, shut the Door, and be deaf to all the knocks and beseeching of Sinners,* Luke 13.26. *That he who spread out his Hands, and stretched out his Wings, to call and gather Sinners to himself, doth now shut them out from himself, and expose them to an Eternal Storm of Vengeance: That he who once acted as a Physician, to heal, should now come to destroy: That he that is a Redeemer to others, should come now to bind obstinate Sinners in Chains, and cast them into Prison, and subject them to Eternal Bondage under the second Death.*

USE 2. *This may strike a Terror into Impenitent Sinners.*

If Christ will come in flaming Fire, what then will become of Stubble fully dry? What will those suffer that are but Chaff? That are Reprobate Silver? And that are but Dross? *Ps.*119.119. *Vessels of wrath fitted for Destruction?* When the *Harvest of the Earth is ripe, when the Grapes of the Vine of the Earth are fully ripe,*

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the Sickle must be thrust in, and made use of, to reap the Harvest, and cut the Grapes, that they may be cast into the Wine-press of the wrath of God, Rev. 14. 15, 18. Tares, barren, and dry Trees, *must be fuel to this flaming fire,* Matt. 3. 10.

USE 3. *Endeavour to prevent destruction by this flaming Fire.*

O make sure that you shall not dwell with *Consuming Fire,* that you shall not inhabit with *Everlasting Burnings.* O come to the Mediator, that he may make peace. O come to the *Blood of sprinkling,* that it may speak, and plead for your Pardon. Fly to Christ, that you may be found *in him,* Ps. 3. 9. and so may find mercy with God, and may be found in peace, and your Faith may be found to Honor and Glory at the Appearing of Christ. It is the Blood of Christ that must quench the Fire of God's wrath; and it is the Spirit of Christ, as mortifying, as sanctifying, that must pull away the Fuel of this Fire. There is a sweet and gracious Promise, *Is.* 1. 25. *I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy Dross, and take away all thy Tin.* How full, how rich, and comprehensive, is this Promise, that the Dross of Prophaness, and the Tin of Hipocrisie, shall be purely purged away? If open Sin, and secret Hipocrisie, be removed, the Fuel of this Eternal Fire will be put away. We must be put into *Christ's Refining Fire,* that we may not be exposed to God's *Consuming Fire.* If Christ now

appear for you in Heaven, *Heb.*9.23,24. he will not appear againſt you in the great Day. Thoſe he has made *Righteouſneſs and Sanctification* to, he cannot Condemn; he will not deſtroy at his Appearing.

5. *For what end will Chriſt be Revealed in Flaming Fire?* It is thus expreſſed, *He comes in a Flame of Fire*, Διδοντ& ἐκδίκησιν, *giving Vengeance.* 1. He that is a merciful, and gracious God, yet will have no other gift to beſtow on impenitent Unbelievers. Tho' Mercy belongeth to God, which he will Exerciſe towards his People; tho' Forgiveneſs belong to him, which he will beſtow on penitent Believers, yet only Vengeance belongs to God, to be executed on hardened Tranſgreſſors, *Heb.*10.30. *Pſ.*94.1,2. He hath no other Attributes but *Juſtice and Power*, Rom.9.22. *to be glorified in them.* 2. This is an Impoveriſhing Gift, when Chriſt gives Vengeance, *the one Talent ſhall be taken away*, Matt.25.28. All that the Souls of Sinners do *Luſt after ſhall depart; all the things that are dainty and goodly ſhall depart, and they ſhall find them no more at all*, Rev.18.14. 3. This is a Tormenting Gift; *it is a Cup of trembling, a Cup of fury*, Iſ.51.21,22. *it is a Cup of red Wine, and full of mixture*; all bitter, all fatal, deadly Ingredients, are ſqueezed into, joined, and are tempered in this Cup, yet it is without mixture, not one drop of Mercy or Kindneſs in it, but it is pure *Wrath and Severity*, as if all the ſtrongeſt,

ſtrongeſt, moſt griping, tormenting Poyſons, did meet in one Cup, *Rev.* 14. 10. and there was nothing to antidote or allay their deadly force and operation. 4. This is a Gift they muſt receive, they cannot decline, avoid, or refuſe. *Jer.*25.15,28. *Take the Wine-cup of this fury at my hand, and cauſe all the Nations, to whom I ſend thee, to drink it. If they refuſe to take the cup and to drink, then ſhalt thou ſay unto them, Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, ye ſhall certainly drink.* I may allude to this Text, Tho' Condemned Sinners do loath the bitter and dreadful Cup, that God giveth to them, tho' they may recoil, ſtart from it, and refuſe it, yet they ſhall certainly drink it. 5. This is a Gift that is Debt and Wages, *Rom.*6.23. *The wages of ſin is death.* So God is ſaid to *repay fury, to repay recompence,* Iſ.59.18. and to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of Fire. *We are commanded to render to all their dues,* Rom. 13.7. Miſery and puniſhment is due to Sinners, if Chriſt ſhould not pay it he would not be true to his Word, or juſt to himſelf. *Tribulation and anguiſh belongs to every Soul that ſins,* Rom.2.9. We are *bid to owe nothing to any man but love,* Rom.13.8. And this is a Debt that muſt be always paying, and yet can never be fully diſcharged; ſo God owes Sinners enmity, and vengeance, and this Debt will be paying, and yet never be wholly paid off, or diſcharged to Eternity. What Preſents do

Sinners

Sinners make to, or what Gifts do they bestow on God? What Fruit did God's Vineyard yield to him? *Were they not sowre, and wild grapes, grapes of gall, and bitter clusters? Wine that is the poyson of Dragons, the cruel venom of Asps?* Deut. 32. 32, 33. What *crop, or harvest, doth barren, and bad ground, yield to the Husbandman, but briers and thorns?* Heb. 6. 8. How Righteous is it then, that Christ should give vengeance to them? Deal out blows, stripes, and wounds to them, and that for ever? Christ offered them Mercy once, and they would not receive it, but he will give them Punishment, he will shew Severity to them, and they shall not be able to decline, refuse, or reject it. *Sinners would not do Christ right, would not give him their hearts*, Prov. 23. 26. *They would not give him glory* Jer. 13. 16. Christ must therefore inflict punishment on them, and give vengeance to them. If Men will not *give God, and Christ glory*, Christ will get honour on them whether they will or no. Compare those two Scriptures, *Jer.* 13. 16. *Give glory to the Lord your God.* And that in *Exod.* 14. 17. *I will get me honour on* Pharaoh, *and all his Host.* Those that will not give Christ glory by repenting and believing, Christ will get Honour by pouring out his fury, and executing vengeance on them. *Ezek.* 28. 22. O Zidon, *in thee I will be glorified, they shall know I am the Lord, when I shall have executed judgments in her. The day of vengeance*

is

is in God's heart, Is.63.4. And the strokes of Justice shall shortly be dealt out by Christ's hands. *The whirlwind of the Lord will go forth in fury, it shall fall grievously on the head of the wicked* Jer.23.19. 6. But on whom will Christ take vengeance? This Text informs us, it is on all that know not, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. As it is *life eternal to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent*, John 17.3. so this causeth death eternal to be ignorant of the true God, and *Jesus Christ whom he hath sent*. Those that hear the Gospel, and do not listen to it, and receive it, are guilty of a wilful and affected Ignorance of God, and Christ. The light shineth, but they come not to it; yea, *they shut their eyes against it*, Matt.13.15. and so concur with Satan to promote their own destruction. The Devil blinds their minds, 2*Cor*.4.4. lest they should believe, *and they close their own eyes*, lest they should see with their Eyes, hear with their Ears, understand with their Hearts, and *so should be converted, and God should heal them*. How guilty are Men before God, who imprison, and shut in Natural Light? *Rom*.1.18. and exclude, shut out, Supernatural Lights. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit, for they are foolishness to him*, 1 Cor.2.14. The blindness, folly, and vanity of their minds, is as a dark Lanthorn about the Candle of Natural Light, to hinder it from shining out in their Words

Words and Actions: They detain, and hold it under unrighteously: Their Lusts are too hard for their Light, and do Rebel against it. And Men come not to that Supernatural Light, that shines in the Gospel, lest their deeds should be reproved, and themselves condemned. Tho' Men may please themselves with Notional, and Speculative Knowledge, as it may swell their Pride, and commend them to the Esteem of Men, yet when it should touch and wound Conscience, affect the Heart, be reduced to Practise, and reform the Life, then *they hate knowledge*, Prov. 1 29. Thus those two Texts are to be reconciled, *Isa.* 58.2. *They seek me daily, and delight to know my ways.* Yet this is charged even on *Israelites*, That they hated Knowledge, and would not chuse the Fear of the Lord; they did not like to please, fear, worship, and serve God in sincerity.

Quest. *But is there no distinction of Persons meant in these words? Are they to be understood of the same Unregenerate Persons within the visible Church, that both know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ?*

Answ. It is true, that there are Carnal, Unconverted Persons within the Church, that may be said neither to know God, nor yet to obey the Gospel of Christ. Eli's *Sons*, tho' they were Priests, are said *not to know the Lord*, 1 Sam. 2.12. And the Jews are thus charged, *Through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the Lord,*

Lord, Jer. 9. 6. Either they thought they had found some better Good, some sweeter Portion than God, or that the knowledge of God would disturb their Peace, and imbitter their Pleasures and Lusts to them; and thus thro' deceit they did refuse to know God. God complains, *That his People are destroy'd for lack of knowledge*, Hos 4. 5, 6. It may be Day without, as Men are under a clear dispensation of the words of Reconciliation, Righteousness and Salvation, yet it may be Night within, by reason of the blindness of the Mind, and obstinacy of the Will. If Men *did rightly know God, they would trust in him*, Ps 9. 10. and set their love on him. *Ps.* 91. 14. They that know Gods name, are said to give their hearts to him, to set their love on him. But it is apparent, that the Trust of many, called Christians, is with-held, and their love withdrawn from God. *They cast God himself, and his Word too, behind their backs*, Psal. 50. 17. and therefore do not know God. If they did indeed know the perfect Holiness of God, the Purity of his Word, the strictness of his Law, the Severity and Terror of his Threatnings, they would fly to Christ, submit to the Righteousness of God, obey the Gospel, and Trust on the Lord Jesus, both for Reconciliation and Sanctification, *Matt.* 5. 6. It is too evident, that all Unconverted Persons in the Church, though called Christians, do not

know

know God, *Their Light doth not ſhine before men*, Phil. 2. 15, 16. And they do not hold forth the Word of Life in their Converſations, *Pſal.* 10. 4, 3. They do not think of God, he is not in all their thoughts, *Eph.* 2. 2. They do not truſt in him. They do not love God. Chriſt ſaith to the *Jews*, *I know you, that the love of God is not in you*, John 5. 42. *They delight not in the Almighty*, *Job* 27. 10. they fear not God. *My fear, ſaith God, is not in thee*, Jer. 2. 19. *There is no fear of God before their eyes*, Rom. 3. 18. *They lightly eſteem of God, are unmindful of him, and forget him*, Deut. 32. 5, 18. They do not ſeek after God, draw near to him, converſe and enjoy communion with him, *Rom.* 3. 11. If Men deſigned to pleaſe God, would they paſs the bounds that *he ſets to them?* Eph. 2. 2. *break the yoke he puts on them?* Would they affront and reject his Authority? Would they make God's Laws void, and live in the open and notorious breach of his Commands? If Men did know God, could they allow themſelves in Envy, Hatred, Malice? In Curſing, Swearing, Lying, Stealing, Whoredom, Adultery? Could they go on in vain, unprofitable Talks; yea, in filthy and rotten Communication, in Wanton and Laſcivious Language? Could Men be ſo unjuſt one to another, as to Plow away one anothers Land at Seed-time, and to cut over

their

their Furrows, and take away their Neighbours Corn at Harveſt? Could Men ſo gripe, and oppreſs one another? Could they live without Prayer, and not call upon God in their Families? Would they ſo neglect their Children? Not Teach, Inſtruct, and Educate them for God, but rather yield, and give them up to Satan, by leaving them under the Power of Darkneſs, and the Law of Sin? Could they ſo connive at their Sins, and not ſeverely check and chaſtize them for, and reſtrain them from their Vices, if they did know God? If Men neither own God as a Father, and do not acknowledge Men as Brethren, do not all theſe Evils loudly proclaim, and ſtrongly evidence, that many, called Chriſtians, *do not know God?* Therefore Chriſt will come to Execute Vengeance on them; to thruſt them into a dark, dreadful Priſon, and to caſt them into a Furnace of unquenchable Fire.

But this expreſſion, *thoſe that know not God*, doth mainly and chiefly concern the Heathen World, *Galat.* 4. 8. *While the* Galatians *did not know God, they did ſervice to them that were no Gods.* And the *Corinthians* were carried to Dumb Idols, even as they were led. They did not know the right Object of Adoration, but did Service to them that were no Gods by Nature. They did endow a falſe God with their Religious Adoration.

Many

Many of the Heathen did think the World was from Eternity, and never made: They did not acknowledge the Author of their Being, or the end for which they were made. They ſought after nothing but what they ſhould eat, what they ſhould drink, and wherewithal they ſhould be clothed, *Matt.6. 32.* as if they were all Body, and there were no other Life but this preſent Life. Now this is a heinous Sin for Heathens, not to know God, not to ſeek after him. This is a great and inexcuſable ſin not to know, when there are ſo many Witneſſes that do teſtify for God. *He hath not left himſelf without witneſs*, Acts 14. 16, 17. Theſe Witneſſes ſhould be called and examined, *Job* 12. 7, 8. *Ask now the Beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee; and the Fowls of the Air, and they ſhall tell thee; or ſpeak to the Earth, and it ſhall teach thee; and the Fiſhes of the Sea ſhall declare unto thee.* There is a great Cauſe depending about the Being of God. When this weighty Matter is to be tried, ſurely we ſhould, by Meditation, call and ask the Witneſſes, what they can teſtify for God, his Being, Power, and Goodneſs?

2. There are ſo many Preachers that declare his Glory, and ſhew forth his Handy-work. As this is Engraven on the Scriptures, *God ſpake me*, ſo this is in Capital Letters writ-

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ten on the Creature, *God made me.* That Hand that ſtretched out that ſpangled Canopy above our Heads, and that hath ſpread this flowery Carpet that is under our Feet, *day unto day uttereth ſpeech*, Pſal. 9. 2. Every day doth abundantly utter ſomething of God. And the ſame word is uſed of the Righteous, *Pſal.* 145. 7. *I ſhall abundantly utter the memory of that Goodneſs.* Two things are here to be obſerved, 1. That the Creatures are ſuch Preachers, as never do keep ſilence, *day unto day uttereth ſpeech.* It offers new Matter of Contemplation and Admiration, and Night unto Night ſheweth Knowledge. Every ſucceeding Night inſtructs the preceding Night, and makes ſome farther and new Diſcoveries of God, that ſhould more enlighten the Minds, and affect the Hearts of Men towards God. 2. The Creatures preach God in a Speech and Language, that all Nations may underſtand, though their Languages are ſo confounded, and are not underſtood by other People and Nations; there is no Speech, or Language, where their voice is not heard. The moſt ignorant and brutiſh *Barbarians*, may underſtand the Speech and Language that the Creatures do preach in. The confuſion of *Babel* doth not hinder the Creatures from being underſtood in what they publiſh, and declare of God.

3. There is a great Book in which Men may read God, *Pſal.* 19. 4. *Their Line is gone forth into all the Earth, and their Words to the end of the Earth.* The Pages of this great Book are the Sea, the Heavens, and the Earth. And this Book ſtill lieth open, and the moſt ignorant, illiterate, and unskilful, may read in this Book, and underſtand ſomewhat of its Contents. This is a long Line that reacheth to the ends of the Earth; and it is written in ſuch great and Capital Letters, that all may read it.

4. Men are in the World as in a great Room all hung round with Glaſſes; he that is in ſuch a Room, may clearly and plainly ſee the Attributes, and Excellencies of God. *The inviſible things of God, from the Creation of the World, are clearly ſeen,* Rom. 1. 20. They are evidenced and demonſtrated to Senſe; yet ſo, that the Underſtanding doth help the Senſes, νοήμασι. They are underſtood by the Mind, that contemplates the things that are made; and ſo Senſe, by the aſſiſtance of the Mind, doth clearly ſee inviſible things.

5. There are Garments, with which God is Clothed, and in which he may be ſeen, *Pſal.* 104. 2. *David* ſaith to God, *Who coverest thy ſelf with Light, as with a Garment.*

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The *Pſalmiſt* plainly refers to God's Creation of Light. *Gen.* 1. 3. *God ſaid let there be Light, and there was Light.* God did then put on this bright and glorious Creature as a Garment. As the Greatneſs, Majeſty, and Glory of Kings, is ſeen in their Clothing, ſo God is known how Powerful, how Good, how Wiſe, he is by his Works. *Sculteus* ſaith, (on *Pſal.* 104.) Veſtis Dei Contemplanda, ſi Deum Contemplari volueris; *You muſt view God's Garment, if you will Contemplate God himſelf, for God himſelf otherwiſe is inviſible.* We cannot come to the naked Divine Eſſence, but we muſt ſee the firſt Cauſe clothed with Effects in the Works of Creation and Providence: As when God comes forth to execute Juſtice, he is ſaid *to Clothe himſelf with the Garments of Vengeance.* Iſa. 59. 17. He puts on the *Garments of Vengeance for Clothing, and was clad with Zeal as a Cloak.* Hath God Clothed himſelf with ſo many, and ſuch glorious Garments? Are his Attributes ſo viſible in his Creatures? And are not Men inexcuſable, that know not God, who daily comes forth to us Clothed in his Works of Creation and Providence, and thereby renders himſelf viſible to us?

Queſt. *But what do theſe Witneſſes, Preachers, Books, Glaſſes, Garments of God, diſcover and make known?*

Anſw. The Being, the Eternity, Wiſdom, Power, and Goodneſs of God.

1. The Being of a God, the inviſible things of God from the Creation of the World, are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his Eternal Power and Godhead, or his Divine Being. Where there are Effects, there muſt be a Cauſe; where there are Streams, there muſt be a Fountain. If you will trace, follow, and perſue the ſmalleſt ſtream, it will at laſt bring you to the Ocean; ſo follow the ſmalleſt Rivulet of Creature-Beings, and it will bring you to God, the infinite Sea of Being. Where there is ſo great a Houſe raiſed with ſo much Art and Skill, there muſt needs be a Builder: None ever ſaw a Houſe built by Chance, or Accident, and what Folly and Madneſs is it to think, that this great Houſe of the World was built by a Caſual, yet Lucky meeting of Stones together? The Creatures are not of themſelves, and therefore cannot be from Eternity. That only that is Infinite, Omnipotent, Allwiſe, can be from Eternity; Creatures are not ſo, and therefore cannot be from Eternity. Ask any Man living, did you make your ſelf, none can be ſo impudent to affirm that he made himſelf. And there is the ſame Reaſon againſt his Father, or any other

other Man, that he did not make himſelf; therefore Men muſt neceſſarily come to a Firſt Man, and to a God that made him. Thus the Creatures do demonſtrate the Being of a God.

2. The Creatures declare the Eternity of God. He that made all things muſt neceſſarily be before them. *Col.* 1. 17. *He is before all things, and by him all things were made and conſiſt*, Col. 1. 16, 17. *From everlaſting to everlaſting he is God*, Pſal. 90. 2. If God were not from Eternity, the World could not have had a beginning, or any Creature have been formed.

3. The Creatures proclaim the power of God, *Rom.* 1. 20. *his eternal power.* Men ſpeak words, but God ſpeaks things; *by his word he calls things that are not*, Rom. 4. 17. And their anſwer is to riſe, ſpring up, and exiſt; that which is nothing, yet hears and obeys God. *God ſaid let their be Light*, let the Earth bring forth Trees, Plants, Herbs, and Flowers, and it was ſo; and yet the Earth had no Seed of theſe things in it ſelf, *Gen.* 1. 11, 12. And as God ſpeaks Creatures, ſo he breaths the Soul, *Gen.* 2. 7. *God breathed into mans noſtrils the breath of life, and he became a living ſoul.* And God writes in the Minds and Wills of Men; none but he

can reach, or come at these Tables, and write in them. And God doth not as Men, write Syllables, and Words, but he writes new Principles, Habits, Dispositions, and Inclinations; he writes Light in the Mind, and Love in the Will. Consider of these three glorious Effects of the power of God, That *he speaks Creatures, breathes Souls, writes new Principles and Inclinations in the Soul.* The power of God gloriously shines in the Work of Creation.

1. That he made all things out of nothing. *Heb.* 11. 3. *Things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear.* That is, They were made out of nothing. There did not appear any eternal First Matter, out of which God made all things. Other Artists do not make their Matter, but they must have it made to their Hands, but God made all things out of nothing.

2. God made all things: By the Word of his Power, *Psal.* 33. 6. *were the heavens made, and all the host of them, by the breath of his mouth.* Psal. 33. 9. *He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.*

2. God made all things without any Assistant or Helper, *Isa.* 44. 24. *I am the Lord that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the Heaven*

Heaven alone, that ſpreadeth abroad the Earth by my ſelf.

3. There was none that invented a Pattern, or drew a Scheme or Draught, to direct God to Work by.

4. None gave God Counſel, or Inſtructed him, what he ſhould do, or how he ſhould Work. *Who hath directed the ſpirit of the Lord, or being his counſellor hath taught him? With whom took he counſel, and who inſtructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and ſhewed to him the way of underſtanding?* Iſa. 40. 13, 14.

5. God *hangs the earth on nothing*, Job 26. 7. This amazed *Ariſtotle*, (*de Mundo.*) That if you did throw up a clod of Earth into the Air, it would not hang there; and that yet, the whole Globe of the Earth, and Water, ſhould hang in the Air, and all things be born up by the Word of God's power, *Heb.* 1. 2. It is ſaid of God, in *Pſal.* 95. 4. *In his hand are the deep places of the earth.* God's Hand carries the whole Globe of the Earth; its Foundation is laid in his Hand, and is ſupported by him.

6. There is a daily ſtrong confirmation of the Hiſtory of the Creation, and ſuch an

evident demonſtration of the power of God, it plainly appears that it is true, That all things came from nothing at firſt, becauſe they daily ſpring, and riſe from ſuch ſmall, contemptible beginnings, as are next kin to nothing: As that from an Acron ſhould grow an Oak of above twenty four Tun of Timber. In the *New Foreſt* it is ſaid there was cut an Oak, that Top, Lop, Root, and Body, was eight and twenty Tun of Timber. That from a ſmall Grain of Muſtard-Seed, ſuch a Tree ſhould grow as Chriſt ſpeaks of, *Matt.* 13. 31, 32.

4. The Creatures declare the Wiſdom of God: That out of a Chaos, without Form, Beauty, or Order, God ſhould draw forth, and raiſe ſo beautiful a World. *Athenagoras* (in his *Legat. for the Chriſtians*) tells us, That *Plato* called the World ἡ τεχνὴ τοῦ θεοῦ, *The Art of God.* The Apoſtle *Paul* uſes a Word much to the ſame Senſe, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. *The World,* ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, *in the Wiſdom of God*; that is, in the Frame of Heaven and Earth, in which the Wiſdom of God doth ſo eminently ſhine, by their Natural Wiſdom, or Underſtanding, did not know God. The Wiſdom of God appears in the making of the World.

1. In

1. In making ſuch various ſorts of Creatures. Sixteen hundred ſorts of Herbs are ſaid to grow in *England*; and four thouſand diſtinct Vegetables, Plants, and Trees, are reported to be, and grow in the Phyſick Garden at *Oxford*. None but an Infinite Underſtanding could form the different Ideas of ſo many thouſands of ſorts of Flowers, Trees, Birds, Beaſts, and Fiſhes.

2. That Objects ſhould be ſo exactly fitted to the Senſes of Men; Colours to the Eyes, fragrant Smells to the Noſe, ſweet and grateful Reliſhes to the Taſte, Sounds to the Ear; this could not be a Work of Chance, but of Infinite Wiſdom.

3. That God ſhould form ſeveral Creatures, one higher than another, and ſubordinate to another. God is ſaid to build his Stories in the Heaven, *Amos* 9. 6. There is the loweſt, the middle, the higheſt Heavens, as ſeveral Stories, in a great and high Building; ſo God buildeth up Stories of Creatures on the Earth. There are Plants that are the loweſt Story; Beaſts that are a higher Story, and Man that is the higheſt Story in this lower World; and theſe are ſubſervient to each other. The Plants and Graſs feed the Beaſts, and Beaſts do nouriſh Men; and they ſhould devote themſelves to the Service and Worſhip of God. 4. That

4. That God ſhould put ſuch Shapes and Signatures on Herbs, to ſhew ſomething, what they were made, and are good for. *Eye-bright* hath the figure and ſhape of an Eye, and is an excellent Herb to cure the Maladies of the Eye. *Pimpernel* hath ſomething like the Plague-ſpots under its Leaves, and is of excellent Virtue againſt the Plague.

5. That Herbs, proper to cure Diſeaſes, do naturally grow in the Country, where the Diſeaſe reigns: As *Scurvy-graſs* in *England*, and in other Northern Countries, doth ſpring up Naturally. And yet an Experiment hath been made, and much Art uſed, and Care taken, to Plant and Cultivate *Scurvy-Graſs* in ſome parts of *France*, where the Diſeaſe is not known, and it would not grow.

6. Some Herbs do Figure the Part that they are good to Heal: As Adders-Tongue, Hearts-Tongue, Rib-wort, Wood-Sorrel, that hath the ſhape of a Heart, is accounted a good Cordial Herb.

7. How doth God's Wiſdom appear in placing the Sun, *Pſal.* 19. 4. In the Heaven God is ſaid to have made a Tabernacle, or Dwelling-place for the Sun. That part of the Heavens that is between the two Tro-

picks

picks of *Cancer* and *Capricorn*, in which the Sun ſtill moves, or is, may be ſtiled the *Tabernacle of the Sun*. This is wonderful Wiſdom, that the Sun ſhould be ſo ſituated in the midſt of the Heavens, to communicate Light and Heat to the whole World ſucceſſively: That the Sun never goes beyond the Tropicks, but doth in ſo orderly a way return to us again, and obſerve ſuch an exact Courſe in the lengthning or ſhortning of the days, the Sun doth not Riſe or Set two days in the ſame place. God puts this Queſtion to *Job*, Job 38. 12. *Haſt thou commanded the morning? Haſt thou cauſed the day-ſpring to know its place?* And *Pſal.* 104. 19. The Sun knoweth his going down. The Sun doth Riſe and Set in different places every day, yet it is ſaid to know the place of its Riſing and Setting, as if it had a Principle of Reaſon and Underſtanding, that the Days and Heat ſhould increaſe and decreaſe, in ſuch a ſtated courſe. That we do not paſs from the extremity of Cold into the ſcorching Heat of Summer, but through a Spring, that doth partake of Cold and Heat mixed: And that we do not paſs out of the heat of the Summer, into the extremity of Winter cold, but through an Autumn, that hath a mixture of ſome heat and cold. This is wonderful Wiſdom, that God hath clothed and beautified the Sun with ſuch a glorious Garment of Light, *Pſal.* 19. 5.

19.5,6. *Which is as a Bridegroom coming out of his chamber*; that God hath given him ſo ſwift a motion, that he *rejoyceth as a ſtrong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it.* O how wonderful is God's Wiſdom and Power, to make a Sun that ſhould run round the World every day with ſo ſwift a motion! That God ſhould furniſh the Sun with ſo great a heat, that it is ſaid there is nothing hid from the heat of it! It pierces even to the Roots of Plants and Trees, and reaches into the bowels of the Earth. This alſo is wonderful, That the Sun riſing every Morning, doth give a new ſtamp and beauty to the Earth, and the Creatures in it, *Job* 38. 13, 14. *The day-light takes hold of the ends of the earth*; that is, *the earth is turned as clay to the ſeal.* The Light is as a Seal that ſtamps the Earth; the Earth by darkneſs loſeth its luſtre, (for then we cannot diſcern it) but by the Morning light doth (as to our ſenſe) recover a new luſtre, as if Clay were new ſtamped, and received a new impreſſion by a Seal: and as if the Earth were decked with a new Garment, and variety of Ornaments, and had a new beauty and luſtre put on it. *Manifold are Gods works, and in wiſdom he hath made them all,* Pſal. 104. 24.

5. The

5. The Goodneſs of God eminently appears in the making of the Creatures. The *earth is full of the goodneſs of the Lord*, Pſal. 33. 5. The Earth is ſaid to be full of the Mercy of the Lord, *Pſal.* 119. 64. The *Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works*, Pſal. 145. 9. This was wonderful Goodneſs, that God prepared a place for Mans Habitation before he was made. God commanded the Waters to be gathered together into one place, and the dry Land to appear, that Man might have a place of Abode: *The waters ſtood above the mountains, they covered all*, Pſal. 104. 6, 7, 8. But God rebuked this as a diſorder; he gave forth a thundering Command to the Waters, at which they fled, and haſted away. Two things here are obſervable:

1. That God brake up a deep and hollow place in the Earth, large enough to receive ſuch vaſt quantities of Waters, *Job* 38. 10. *I brake up for it my decreed place*, that the Earth ſhould ſink ſo deep as to entertain theſe huge Treaſures of Waters. It is ſomewhat probable, that as the Earth was depreſſed ſo low in ſome places, ſo it did proportionably ſwell, and riſe high in other places. The low Valley, in which the deep Sea doth lie, is anſwered by high Mountains, that aſcend ſo much above the plain ground.

2. This

2. This is observable, That God shut in the Sea; he sets bars and doors. God commanded the Sea, *Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed*, Job 35. 10, 11. This is wonderful Power and Goodness, for God to Park in, and Incloſe, ſo wild and furious a Creature as the Sea is; and when its Waves riſe to be as high Mountains, God is ſaid to tread on the Waves of the Sea, *Job* 9. 8. And God treads theſe ſwelling and mountainous Waves into a Plain when he allays the Wind; cauſeth the Storm to ceaſe, and makes a Calm. God hath ſet a bound, that they may not paſs over; that they turn not again to cover the Earth. The ſand is fixed as a bound to this furious Creature *by a perpetual decree*, Jer. 5. 22.

2. Here is more Goodneſs, that reſtrains the Waters that are over our Heads: *God binds up the waters in his thick clouds, and the clouds are not rent under them*, Job 26. 8. We dwell between two Seas, a Sea below, and a Sea in the Clouds. There are vaſt quantities of Waters in the Clouds, that would fall down and overwhelm us, did not the power of God bear them up. For this reaſon, as well as others, Gods *ſtrength* is ſaid to be *in the clouds*, Pſal. 68. 34.

3. That

3. That God hath made ſuch variety, and abundance of Creatures, for Mans uſe: Bread to ſtrengthen, and Wine to chear his Heart, *Pſal.* 104. 15. Birds, Beaſts, and Fiſhes, for his uſe. God did not make Man till he had ſtocked a Farm, and furniſhed a Houſe for him. *The earth is full of Gods riches*, Pſal. 104. 24. which were made not to advantage, or enrich God, *for he hath need of nothing*, Acts 17. 25. but Man was to be enriched by being made Proprietor and Poſſeſſor of this great Houſe and Farm.

4. That God ſhould ſo graciouſly ſhare, and divide the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and by turns communicate their light to all Nations, *Deut.* 4. 19. The Sun ſhines to ſome, and makes a day with them, when it's night with others. The Sun gives a ſix Months day to ſome, and a ſix Months night to others; ſo the Moon and Stars do by turns afford light to ſeveral parts of the Earth.

5. That God hath made Beaſts for burden, to carry Men, and their Goods, up and down; to Draw and Plow their Ground. And God hath made other Beaſts, Birds and Fiſh, to feed Men.

6. That God hath not only made Herbs and Plants for Food, but alſo for Medicine, Heal-

Healing of Diſeaſes, and Curing of Wounds.

7. That the Earth doth not only ſerve us, with its ſurface and outſide, bearing under-Wood, Trees, Broom, Furzes, and Turf, but with its inſide, Heart and Bowels. There are ſeveral rich Mines, precious Stones, Peat and Coals, growing in the Bowels of the Earth for Fuel. The Earth ſerves us with its outſide and inſide, which ſhould oblige us to ſerve God with our Souls and Bodies, with our Hearts and Lives.

8. Though particular Creatures, as Men, Beaſts, Birds, Fiſh, Flowers, Herbs, Trees, do die, yet God doth not ſuffer any Species of Creatures utterly to periſh, and be extinguiſhed, but new Creatures do ſpring up and riſe in the room of thoſe that decay and periſh, and ſo do fill up their place. *Thou ſendeſt forth thy ſpirit, and they are created, thou reneweſt the face of the earth,* Pſal. 104. 30. God's Spirit gives Life to the Creatures, he brings forth a new Stock of Men, Beaſts, Birds, Trees, and Plants, ſo that God's great Farm is not left unſtocked and unfurniſhed; God may be ſeen and felt in his Creatures. Thoſe that do not ſee God's Glory, that do not adore his Wiſdom and Power, that do not admire his Goodneſs, deſerve to be *conſumed out of the earth,* and to ceaſe their being here,

here, *Psal.* 104. 4. yea, that Christ should come in flaming Fire, to take Vengeance on them for their Ignorance of God: That they close their Eyes against such a light as shines through the World, spreads and diffuses it self among all the Creatures. Man was made to seek God, *Acts* 17.26, 27. And God endued Man with a *Life of Light*, John 1.40. Taught him more than the Beasts of the Earth, and made him wiser than the Fowls of Heaven, *Job* 35.10,11. and this was to fit Man to ask and inquire after God. Every Rational Creature should say, Where is God my Master, that gives Songs in the Night? God did not breathe a Soul into Man, that he should pant after the dust of the Earth, *Amos* 2.7. but should breathe and pant after God, *Psal.* 42.1,2.

2. *Christ will come in flaming fire, to take Vengeance on those that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Three things here I shall insist upon: 1. I shall shew what the Gospel is. 2. What it is to obey the Gospel. 3. How great and heinous a sin it is, not to obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. What the Gospel is, I Answer, It is not only ἐπαγγελία, a Promise, but εὐαγγέλιον, Good News that this Promise is performed, *Acts* 13.32,33. *We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise, which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their*

children,

children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again. These glad Tidings are brought by the *Son out of the bosom of the Father*, John 1.18. It is good News of the best Good, the sweetest Feast, the richest Inheritance, the most Noble and Honorable Relation to God; and that when a Sentence of Death might have been dreaded, and an Eternal Vengeance felt. It is *a Gospel of grace*, Acts 20.24. *A Gospel of salvation*, Eph. 13.1,24. *The gospel of the kingdom*, Matt. 4.23. Here is Salvation from the most dreadful Evils, the possession of a glorious and everlasting Kingdom, and all bestowed in a way of pure Grace.

2. What is it to obey the Gospel: we read of obeying the Truth, *Gal.* 3.1. and what shall be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God, 1 *Pet.* 4.17. These expressions of obeying the Truth, and obeying the Gospel, do seem to intimate that the Gospel is something more than a meer Promise. To obey the Gospel, is to Believe and Repent; we must credit God's Testimony, 1 *Cor.* 2.1. *Is.* 5. 3. *Rom.* 15.17. Believe the Report he gives, receive the Gifts that he offers, else we reject the highest Mercy, and make God a Liar, 1 *John* 5.10. if we believe not the Gospel.

2. We must also Repent of our Sins. To be called to Repent of our Sins, and to have such sweet, great, and strong Incouragements to Repent, is certainly Gospel-grace. *Museu-*

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us (on *Matt.* 10.5.) saith, He doth not preach the Gospel that doth not preach Repentance. That Repentance is a Gospel Duty, these three things do evidence and demonstrate.

1. It is a Call from an offended provoked Husband, to return from our Whoredoms, and to be Loyal to him. *Thou hast played the harlot with many Lovers, yet return again to me, saith the Lord,* Jer. 3. 1. God acting according to the Covenant of Works, would for ever divorce, and eternally punish Sinners for their Adulteries, not call 'em to be reconciled.

2. The Call to Repentance is a Call from Christ as a Physician, *Matt.* 9. 12, 13. *The whole have no need of a Physician; I am come to call sinners to repentance.* Christ in this acts as a Physician, in calling Sinners to Repentance, that they may be his Patients, and that he may heal and recover them from their Diseases.

3. A Call to Repentance flows from God, and Christ as a Shepherd: He seeks out that which was lost, and brings back that which was gone astray, *Luke* 19.10. These are Acts proper to Christ as a Shepherd, and therefore Repentance must needs be a Duty of the Gospel, *Zech.* 10.8. *I will hiss for them, and gather them, for I have redeemed them.* Here is a plain Allusion to the Shepherds hiss, to gather the Sheep that are scattered; and he gathers them, because he hath Redeemed them. This still more evidences, that a Call to Repentance is grounded on the Gospel.

3. *I ſhall ſhew you what a heinous Sin it is not to obey the Goſpel.* 1. The Goſpel requires us to be reconciled to God, 2 *Cor.* 1.20. O what Mercy is it, that Reconciliation is poſſible; we could not be Reconciled but by the death of God's Son. We could not be healed but by his ſtripes, *Iſa.* 53.5. God could not make Peace with us, but he muſt make War with his Son, *Zech* 13.7. *Awake, O ſword, againſt my ſhepherd, and ſmite the man that is my fellow.* Devils are not invited to be Reconciled, the blind Heathen World are not called to be Reconciled. Let Heaven and Earth be Witneſs and Judge, whether it be not reaſonable that Sinners ſhould be reconciled to God; that is Love, and Goodneſs, that never did them any wrong; that is their Creator, Preſerver, and Benefactor: Is not the enmity of Men unjuſt, fooliſh, and pernicious to themſelves? Shall Graſhoppers leap up againſt Heaven? *Iſ.* 40. 22. Shall Worms, *Job* 25.6. contend with the Almighty? Shall Potters Veſſels challenge a Rod of Iron? *Pſ.* 2.8,9. Shall Stubble and Chaff, Briers and Thorns, ſet themſelves in Battle againſt devouring Fire? Hath God found out a way to appeaſe his own wrath? *Iſ.* 27 4 5. To cut off his own plea and advantages againſt us? *Nahum* 10. 3. To end the dreadful Controverſie between Heaven and Earth, and to ſheath his glittering Sword, and will you yet perſiſt in your enmity,

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and continue the War againſt God? Do you reſolve to pluck down his wrath and vengeance on you? Will the ſhort, momentary pleaſures of Sin, countervail eternal Torments? When God calls you to be Reconciled, what is contained in it, but that you ſhould lay down your weapons of Hoſtility, and lay hold on Chriſt's atoning Sacrifice, as the only means of Reconciliation? O ſhall not your Scum go out of you? Shall not your Droſs be ſeparated from you? Shall not all the Tranſgreſſions be caſt away by you? Should you not return to your place, ſubmit, and be ſubject to God? You muſt turn from your Iniquity, God will never change and depart from his Holineſs. 2. The Goſpel calls men to be Eſpouſed to Jeſus Chriſt, *Cant.* 8.8. The little Sister, that is, the *Gentiles*, are ſaid to be ſpoken for; that is, to give her Heart to, and ſet her love on Chriſt Jeſus, 1 *Cor.* 6.17. Chriſt doth wooe you to be joined to him, to give your ſelves to him, and to be his, 2 *Cor.* 8.5. Is not Chriſt the moſt beautiful, rich, loving, and glorious Bridegroom? Can you find any other Match, that may compare with him? *He is fairer than the children of men*, Pſal. 45.2. He is white, and ruddy, and the chiefeſt of ten thouſands, *Cant.* 5.10. *He hath unſearchable riches*, Epheſ. 3. 8. He is love it ſelf, *Cant.* 3.5. All power in Heaven and Earth is given to him. He was dead, but he is alive, and lives for

more, *Matt.*28.18. *Rev.*1.15. He will never put you away, or leave you a desolate disconsolate Widow. Is it not amazing, that Beauty should wooe Deformity? Riches solicit Poverty? Nobility suit Vileness and Baseness, and yet be rejected? If you match not with Christ, who shall pay your Debts? Protect and cover you from Arrests? Who shall make you a Jointure, or provide you a House and Home in another World? Who shall wash away your Guilt and Filth? Supply your Wants? Cloth and Cover your Nakedness? If Jesus Christ be not your Husband, will you still dote on base and beggarly Objects? Will you still go a Whoring from God? *Psal.*73.27. Will you continue *Aholah*, dwelling in your own Tent, and broken off from the House of God? Those that slight, and spurn at Christ's love, are they not worthy to feel the scorching Fire of his wrath? Carnal Creatures do not love a Spiritual Bridegroom; they rush into the embraces of carnal and present Objects, but Souls consider not they must shortly be snatched out of the bosom of beloved Objects, must be separated from them, and be for ever punished for their Adulterous Embraces of them. 3. *It is a heinous sin not to be willing to be Christ's Patients.* He is a Physician, *Matt.* 9.12. His Blood is a Soveraign Medicine against the guilt of Sin, his Spirit is a mighty Antidote against the power of Iniquity. Never

ver was there such a Physician as Christ, that did Die to provide the Medicine, and then rose again, and visits the Dead to apply it, *John* 5.25. None can visit and recover the Dead but Jesus Christ; but who regards, or minds, a cure for his Soul? Do not the wounds of Sinners more rankle, fester, and putrify? Do not their Diseases grow stronger on 'em? Do not their Lusts root deeper? Yea, are not Sinners so blinded, that they think their Diseases to be Members necessary and profitable? How many do not account themselves sick, but rather whole? *Matt.* 9.12,13. The Jews, thought themselves to be sound, and free from Spiritual Diseases. This highly provokes Jesus Christ, that on such costly terms he became a Physician, and yet Men feel no want, or need of him, *John* 3.14,15. Tho' our diseases are dangerous, and threaten us with eternal Death; tho' the cure seems to be so easie, that Persons may look to Christ, and be rid of the deadly Poyson of the Old Serpent; a touch of Christ may heal the Spiritual Leprosie, and our touching of Christ by Faith, may cause our issue of Blood to dry up, yet Sinners see not, know not the plague of their own hearts, they are pleased with their *Dropsie*, with *Thirst*, their Feverish Fire, and burning Lusts; they think they should be maimed, if their Members on Earth were cut off; and that their Lives would be uncomfortable, if bereaved

of the Pleaſures of Sin; tho' their condition without Chriſt be wholly deſperate, yet they will not part with their Diſeaſes, but languiſh under them, pine away in them, and die eternally.

4. It is heinous Diſobedience againſt the Goſpel, that Men will not be Chriſt's Gueſts, *Mat.* 22. 1, 2, 3. The *Jews* were invited to a Marriage-Feaſt, made by the Father for his Son Jeſus Chriſt, *Mat.* 22. 1. *Pſal.* 18. ult. *Pſal.* 22. 26. to partake of his Reſt, his Pleaſure, his Joy, his Glory; but Sinners make light of the Chear, tho' it be ſpiritual, ſuited to the nature and duration of the Soul; tho' it be ſatisfactory, and will make the Hearts of Men to live for ever, yet, as ſick Perſons, they abhor this dainty Meat, *Job* 33. 20. They luſt after the Dainties of Carnal Delights, they are prepoſſeſſed with the love of the World, and ſo do haſten to the Feaſt that Satan bids them to, but they invent and make Excuſes to blind their own Minds, and harden their own Hearts, and to hold themſelves back from this Feaſt; they lay out their Money for that which is not Bread, and their Labour for that which ſatisfies not; they muſt ſhortly fall under an eternal Famin of all Good, and then muſt eat the bitter Fruit of their own ways and doings, and drink the Wrath of the Almighty. This is a heinous Sin, that Men will not come to

Chriſt's

Christ's Feast, 1. when they are not able to keep alive their own Souls, *Psal.* 22. 29. they have nothing to sustain and support their languishing and dying Souls, but, as the Prodigal, they are ready to perish with Famine. 2. This is a Feast made on a Sacrifice, *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, let us therefore keep the Feast*, 1 *Cor.* 5. 7, 8. *Isa.* 25. 6. How precious, how costly is this Feast! 3. It is a Feast of Marrow and fat things: here is Pardon and Justification thro' the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ: here is Adoption, Salvation, a Kingdom of Glory; God himself will be the Father and Portion of those that come to this Feast; here are Wines well refined from all dross and dregs. 4. It is a Feast made *for all Nations*, *Hedges are pluck'd up*, and Inclosures are thrown open, this is a *common Salvation*, *Isa.* 25. 6. *Luke* 14. 23. 5. Christ's Ministers, as they are to pluck secure Sinners out of the Fire, so they are to strive, and compel them to come in to the Feast, *Jud.* 23 *Luke* 14. 23.

5. This is affronting and highly provoking Disobedience to the Gospel, that Men will not traffick and trade with Christ, that they will not be Christ's Chapmen and his Customers, when 1. Christ's Goods are excellent and necessary: We must be poor, without his Gold tried in the Fire; we must be shamefully naked, without his white Raiment;

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we muſt be eternally blind without his Eye-ſalve; we muſt ſtarve, if we do not eat of his good things, and delight our ſelves in the fat things offer'd: here is Milk for nouriſhment, and ſpiritual Wine, as a moſt noble and generous Cordial; we may eat and not die, *John* 6. 50. *Pſal.* 22. 26. we may eat and be ſatisfied, and our *Hearts will live for ever.* 2. Theſe Goods are brought near, *Iſa.* 55. 1. *Come down to the Waters,* as Goods brought from a foreign Country to the Wharf, Key, or Shore of a Town or City; and ſome are ſent up into the City, to proclaim that the Goods are arrived, and are to be had at the Water-ſide: The Blood of Chriſt is the *Red-Sea,* by which all Chriſt's ſpiritual Goods are imported into the World. 3. Chriſt keeps a Market for the Poor, and none but he doth ſo, *Iſa.* 55. 1. *buy Wine and Milk without mony and price.* Trade is driven by Mony, or exchange of Goods, but here neither Mony nor Price, we part with nothing that doth impoveriſh us or enrich Chriſt. If there were Markets and Fairs kept for the Poor here in the World, how would they be frequented? what flocking, what crowding would there be to get to ſuch Markets? yet how do Chriſt's goods lie by, as ſlighted and neglected! 4. Chriſt counſels us to buy of him, and his *Counſel* ſhould be a *Command* to us, and lay a Neceſſity on us, but (alas!) how ſtupid and

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senſleſs are Men, that provide no Treaſure for their Souls or Eternity? they have no *Good* to carry away with them, or to enjoy for ever, they ſeek not for their own things, *Luk.* 16. 12. but content themſelves with the things of another; ſo they are only Stewards, not Proprietors; *Riches* are the things of another, but *Graces* are our own things: but Sinners ſee not their own Wants and Poverty, they underſtand not, prize not *Chriſt's Riches* and *Fulneſs*, *Rev.* 3. 17. they are contented to continue poor, as deſtitute of an *inherent*, and naked, as void of an *imputed Righteouſneſs*.

6. This ſtirs up Chriſt's Anger againſt, and plucks down his Vengeance on Sinners, that when Chriſt comes near to them, knocks with Importunity, and waits with much Patience, yet they will not open to Chriſt; *He came to his own, yet his own received him not*, *John* 1. 11. *Luke* 2. 7. If *Chriſt* with his Body were on Earth, would not they be accounted very unkind and inhuman, that would not entertain and lodge *Chriſt* in their Houſes? But yet do not thouſands of nominal and titular *Chriſtians* ſhut *Chriſt* out of their Hearts? they ſuffer Sin, Satan, and the World to keep poſſeſſion, but they ſhut out the Prince of Life, the King of Glory, the Heir of all things; they are not willing that *Chriſt* ſhould come in, ſubject all to himſelf, order and govern all for himſelf: Guilt, Poverty, and Miſery

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are ſhut into their Souls; Righteouſneſs, Riches, Life are ſhut out.

7. This is grievous Diſobedience to the Goſpel, that Men are not willing to be made clean, or ſet free. 1. They are not willing to be made clean; *As a Fountain caſteth out her waters, ſo* Jeruſalem *caſteth out her wickedneſs: O* Jeruſalem, *wilt thou not be made clean?* Jer. 6. 7. When ſhall it once be? Is it not moſt reaſonable that Souls ſhould be made clean? yet they return as *the Dog to his vomit, and as the Sow that was waſhed to her wallowing in the mire*, 2 *Pet.* 2. laſt. God pronounces woe to thoſe that will not be made clean, and will you deceive your ſelves, and ſay, it ſhall be well with you? *Chriſt* tells us, *Except he waſhes us, we can have no part with him in the Kingdom of Glory*, John 13. 8. and will you give the Ly to *Chriſt*, and credit *Satan*, that you ſhall go to Heaven tho' you are not waſhed? Can you thruſt into the new *Jeruſalem*, into which no unclean thing ſhall enter, *Rev.* 21. laſt? Men ſometimes promiſe fair, and faintly reſolve to cleanſe themſelves, but when ſhall it once be? they that cleanſe not away their Filth, muſt themſelves be waſhed away, as Spots from the Face of the *Church*, and be abhorred by God for ever. 2. Men are highly diſobedient to the Goſpel, in that they will not be made free; they are fond of their Fetters, and hug their Chains, as the Servant that re-

rejected the benefit of the Year of Releaſe or Jubilee, ſaying, *I love my Maſter, I will not go out free, Exod.*21. 5,6. So Men love *Sin*, their old Maſter; when a better choice is offer'd, they ſtick to their old and firſt choice; *yea, they have choſen their own ways, and their Soul delights in their abominations*, Iſa. 66. 3. The moſt of Men are like the carnal *Iſraelites*, ſatisfied with their Slavery: They ſaid to *Moſes* and *Aaron*, *Let us alone to ſerve the* Egyptians, *Exod.* 14. 12. So Sinners would not be diſturbed, they would be let alone to ſerve the Devil, and enjoy their Luſts.

8. This is high diſobedience to the Goſpel, that Men will not have *Chriſt* to reign over them; they are *incenſed*, Iſa. 45.24. they rage againſt *Chriſt*, *Luke* 19. 14,27. *Pſa.* 2. 1. but I may renew the Queſtion that *Pilate* put to the *Jews*, when they were ſo inflam'd againſt *Chriſt*, *What evil hath he done?* Mat. 27. 23. *Chriſt* calls Souls out of Priſon, and from their wandrings and ſtrayings, he makes Men free from the Law of Sin and Death, and is this to do Evil? how unreaſonable is it that Men ſhould be ſo diſaffected towards, and ſo prejudic'd againſt the Kingdom of *Chriſt*, when he reigns to deſtroy the reigning power of Sin, Satan, and Death, and to exalt his Subjects now to reign with him in the Kingdom of Grace, and hereafter to ſit in the Throne, and reign with *Chriſt* in the Kingdom of Glory.

Glory. O that Sinners ſhould ever be ſo ungrateful to *Chriſt*, and ſo injurious to their own Souls! how mild, benign, and gracious is the Government of *Chriſt*? he rules not only as a Political Head that gives Laws, but as a Natural Head that gives Life, and influences; he governs as a Husband, Brother, and Saviour: how reaſonable therefore is it, that our homage and ſubjection to him ſhould begin in a Kiſs of Faith and Love? *Pſa.* 2. laſt. But how provoking is this, that Men chuſe Sin and Satan a Murtherer, and prefer him Before a Saviour? This is to renew and revive the Affronts put on Chriſt at his Paſſion, and to chuſe *Barabbas* rather than *Jeſus*. Thoſe that would not have *Chriſt* to reign over them for their Salvation, do ſet up *Satan* to rule over them for their Deſtruction.

9. This is ungrateful, and highly provoking Diſobedience to the Goſpel, that Men would have Chriſt to buy, yet to poſſeſs and enjoy nothing: They can be willing Chriſt ſhould hire them, and promiſe them a reward, but they ſtand idle all the day long, will do no Work for Chriſt, they are idle, and barren in the knowledg of Chriſt, yea, walk as Enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt, while they ſet up what he came to pull down, and keep alive what he came to deſtroy. Chriſt hath acted as a Shepherd, and doth demand his *price*, *Zach.* 11. 12. Surely *Love*, *Service*, and *Obedience* is

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due to him, but Men put off Chriſt with an empty Name of *Lord*, and with a dead form of Religion; they do not render the Fruits of a Vineyard, or bring forth the Fruits of God's Kingdom; their Knowledge is cold, idle and barren, as the light of a Glow-worm, that is not ſufficient to direct a Traveller in his way. The Goſpel ſhould bring forth Fruit, from the firſt day that Men know it, *Col.* 1. 5, 6. it ſhould be a Seal, to ſtamp the Image of *God* on *Men*; it ſhould be a Mould, to ſhape and faſhion Mens Hearts and Lives, *Rom.* 6. 17. as the Sun riſeth, and *Man goes forth to his work*, Pſ. 104 23. ſo when *Chriſt* ariſeth and ſhineth in any Country, Men ſhould go forth to all the work of their *heavenly* calling; *Knowledge* ſhould not only float in the *Head*, or be impriſon'd in the *Mind*, but ſhould be a light to *Mens Feet*, and *a Lamp to their Paths*, Pſal. 119. 105. But how many nominal *Chriſtians* do love darkneſs and hate the light? they ſtill love to *wander*, and in the broad day *to follow Sin and Satan*; they do nothing of all that God *commands them*; they only *ſtray, and work Iniquity*, and ſo deſerve to be caſt into *outer darkneſs*, Jer. 14. 10. *Jer.* 32. 23, 30. *Mat.* 8. 12.

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JEREMIAH IV. 3.

For thus ſaith the Lord to the men of Judah *and* Jeruſalem, *Break up your fallow Ground, and ſow not among Thorns.*

IN the words we may obſerve, 1. a Speaker, the Lord: All Men ſhould have an Ear to liſten, when the Lord hath a Tongue to ſpeak. 2. The Perſons ſpoken to, the Men of *Judah* and *Jeruſalem.* 3. The Exhortation or Counſel given to them, *Break up your fallow ground.* Three things are to be remarked in theſe words, 1. That there were *fallow grounds* in *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*, that were a People choſen to be holy to the Lord, and that might ſeem to themſelves a fruitful Field, a pleaſant and delightful Paradiſe. 2. This may alſo ſeem ſtrange, that they ſhould be call'd *to break up their fallow ground.* What an humbling, abaſing Expreſſion is this! they might think they had made a great progreſs in Religion, and were advanced far towards a ripe Harveſt of Righteouſneſs, and was not this to lower and ſet them back, to call on them to *break up their fallow ground?* as tho' they had yet done nothing, had not yet begun or done the firſt work in Religion, or taken the firſt ſtep in the way of God, but

were to begin all anew, and set their hand to the Plough, *to break up their fallow ground.* 3. This is observable, that this Exhortation is given to the Men of *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, that were then the only Church of God: this intimates, that in the Church only there is the spiritual Plow, the Plow-men, and the right Seed to sow the Soil, and no where else; there is a direction and dehortation, *Sow not among Thorns.* Some do think that if they hear Sermons, read the Scriptures and good Books, and do some Actions materially good, that this is Seed sown for a Harvest of Glory; but yet all is labour lost, if the Ground be not cleansed, if the Soul be not purified from base Lusts and Affections: these *Thorns* do bedwarf, rob, starve the good Seed, so that no Fruit is brought to perfection. Holy Duties do not sanctifie a carnal Man, but are defiled by him. *Hag.* 2. 13, 14. they that are unclean themselves do pollute all they meddle with; the Plague that is in the heart infects *thoughts, intentions, words* and *actions*, 1 *Kin.* 18. 38. The fore-skin of the Heart will carnalize all we meddle with, *Jer.* 4. 4. The words may yield us these two Doctrines; 1. That the Hearts of unregenerate Men are like to *fallow Ground.* 2. That it is their Duty to *break up their fallow Ground.* For the prosecuting of the first Doctrin, I shall shew why the Hearts of unregenerate Men are compar'd to *fallow Ground.* 1. A *fallow Ground* is that which once

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was plow'd and ſow'd: Mankind in our firſt Parents were once ſow'd with original Righteouſneſs, beautified with the Image of God, and enobled with a divine life. The firſt Tables that *Moſes* receiv'd were the Work of God; and the Writing was the Writing of God, *Exod.* 32. 16. The Writings and the Tables ſeem to be created together: ſo our firſt Parents had their Soil and ſpiritual Seed created together; the Tables and the Writing were fram'd at once; the Law of God was engraven on the Mind and Will of *Adam* and *Eve*: the Meal of the faculties of their Souls was always leaven'd with holineſs and righteouſneſs; Man's Soul was once ſowed *by*, and became a fruitful field *to God*. 2. This is implied, that now this holy Seed is killed or rooted out; as when Wheat and Barley is ripe and cut, the ſtalks and root dies, and it will never bring forth any more Wheat or Barley; ſo the Law of God is blotted out of, the Image of God defaced from, the Life of God extinguiſhed in our Souls, ſo that we ſhall never pleaſe God, or bring forth any acceptable Fruit to him, if we are not broken up and ſowed anew: our Souls are like the ſecond Tables that *Moſes* brought to God, meer blanks, till God doth again write his Law in them.

3. As a *fallow Ground* ordinarily brings forth only Briars, Thiſtles, Thorns, and ſo is uſeleſs and unprofitable to the Husbandman; ſo our Nature is ſo void and deſtitute of what is good, ſo prone and inclinable to that which is evil, that they that are in the Fleſh cannot pleaſe God, *Ro.* 8. 9.

A corrupt Tree cannot bring forth good Fruit, Mat. 7.18. Original Sin dwells in us, it dwells alone, hath poſſeſſion of the whole Soul, and all its faculties, and it hath not only a Houſe, but a Throne in us naturally; it works in us all manner of *Concupiſcence*, *Rom.* 7. 8. but in this Fleſh of ours dwelleth nothing that is good, *Rom.* 7. 18. but *the Spirit that dwelleth in us luſteth to envy* and all unrighteouſneſs, *Jam.* 4. 5.

4. As a *fallow Ground* muſt be plow'd and ſow'd, elſe 'twill not bear Wheat, or yield Bread, ſo our Hearts muſt be broken, and ſowed with good Seed, elſe Holineſs will never root deep in the Heart, and ſpring up in the Life; we muſt have the Law of God written in us, *Jer.* 31.33. we muſt have the *Fear of God* put into us, *Jer.* 32. 39, 40. and the *Spirit of God*, Ezek. 36. 27. or elſe we ſhall yield no Harveſt of Righteouſneſs or Obedience to God.

Uſe. 1. Be convinc'd of this, that you are a *fallow Ground*, that you have Souls poor and empty of that which is good, and that your carnal Minds are Enmity to God, are not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be, *Rom.* 8. 7. yea, tho' in ſome ſence you may be ſaid to be ſowed, as the *Highway-ground*, the *Stony*, the *Thorny Ground* were, *Mat.* 13. 20, 21, 22. yet you may be ſaid ſtill to be a *fallow*, becauſe the Seed withers, is ſtarved and choked, ſo that no Fruit is brought forth to pleaſe and delight the heavenly Husbandman.

2. Be humbled deeply for this, that you have

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so long continued a *fallow*, so that God hath had no Harvest of Righteousness, no sheaves or gleanings of good Works: you have done nothing of all that God hath commanded you, *Jer.* 32. 23. have only done Evil, and wrought Iniquity, *Jer.* 32. 30. *your thoughts have been only evil*, Gen. 6. 5. your words evil, *How can a corrupt generation speak good things*, Mat. 12. 34? your actions evil, *a corrupt Tree bringeth forth corrupt Fruit*, Matt. 7. 17. The Prodigal that went into a far Country did neither perform service to his Father, nor enjoy communion with him, *Luke* 15. 13.

3. Do not remain a *fallow Ground*, it will be sad to enjoy no good hereafter, for God to reap no Fruits of Righteousness from you, and you to reap no fruits of Mercy from him: therefore be not contented to lie in the ruines of your Falls, and not to be bettered or benefited at all by the Word of Grace, the Gospel of Reconciliation: It will be bad for the Founder to *melt in vain*, *Jer.* 6. 29. Because wickedness is not separated from you, and you refined from your Dross, it will be sad for Christ and his Ministers to labour in vain, because you are not gather'd in; for the Dew and Rain to come often on you, and yet you bring forth only Briars and Thorns, *Heb.* 6. 8. O consider these following things:

1. Your *fallow Ground* is capable of manuring and improvement; as *Isaac* by plowing and sowing in *Canaan* did make a great advantage to himself; that Land which before did only yield Herbage, and feed his Flock, did now bear Corn, and

did nourish himself and his large Family; he sow'd in that Land, and receiv'd in the same year an hundred fold, *Gen.* 26.12. that is, he had reap'd a hundred bushels of Corn for one that he sow'd: how was the ground advanc'd, from feeding Cattel, to feed *Isaac* and his Family! so how is a Soul exalted and enobled by spiritual Tillage, by being plow'd and sow'd! it brings forth Fruit for Christ to gather and eat; *Cant.* 4. ult. *Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat of his pleasant fruits.* Acts of moral Justice may profit Men, may be beneficial to the Commonwealth and human Society, yet if they flow not from a spiritual Spring, grow not on the root of love to God, they do not please God, they are not accepted with him: The Fathers (as *Vossius* in his History of *Pelagianism* tells us) did call these *Opera Sterilia, barren Works*, because they had no tendency to, no influence on Eternal Life: but if you *break up the fallow Ground*, are renew'd by and sow to the Spirit, you may *receive in this life an hundred fold*, and at last reap and inherit *everlasting life*, Mat. 10. 29. *Gal.* 6. 8. *Judgment may dwell in your Wilderness*, Isa. 32. 16. and you that were formerly altogether unprofitable, *Rom.* 3.12. *Philemon's Epist.* may become profitable, highly serviceable to God, greatly beneficial and useful to Men; unclean Creatures may be washed, old and corrupt Creatures may be renew'd, *Tit.* 3.5.

2. Consider how bad it will be not to be plowed and sowed: This is threatned as a terrible Judgment, That *the Land of* Canaan *should keep*

its Sabbaths as long as it lies desolate and ceaseth from Tillage. Is it bad for the Ground to lay desolate, to keep a Sabbath, to cease from Culture? how much worse is it for the Soul to keep its Sabbaths, (not holy, but) carnal and prophane Sabbaths, while God's Plow doth not *break it up*, nor his Seed be sow'd in it? Men then will be *far from Righteousness*, Isa. 46. 12. will serve divers Lusts and Pleasures, and be without God in the *World, they will chuse their own ways, and their Souls delight in their abominations.* The Adversaries of the *Jews*, in the *Babylonish* Captivity, saw their Sabbaths, and mocked at them, *Lam.* 1. 7. but the great Enemy of Souls will rejoyce at the idle and prophane Sabbaths that wicked men keep, when they cease to do good, and leave off *Righteousness in the Earth*, Amos 5. 7.

2. Those that are not broken up and sowed, will be Satan's Possession; as he claims Strays as his, so he is the Lord of *fallow Ground*; *Such are of their Father the Devil, and his lusts they will do*, *John* 8. 44. It is sweet and honourable to be God's Husbandry, 1 *Cor.* 3. 9. but how dreadful is it to be Satan's Husbandry! Satan will still be working in them, *Ephes.* 2. 2. and filling of their Hearts, *Acts* 5. 3. he will be sowing, planting, and grafting in and on them; he will tutor his Nursery by continual suggestions and temptations; Satan will still be serving his turn on, promoting his interest by, and accomplishing his designs in Souls that lye *fallow*: how bad will it be to keep Sabbaths, as resting from spiritual til-

lage? This is to keep Sabbaths to gratifie and worship Satan; these Sabbaths are working days to please the Flesh, and rejoyce the Devil; such do the Devil's Will in time, and if Grace doth not prevent, they must suffer God's Will to Eternity.

3. Those that are as a *fallow Ground* do bitterly provoke God to anger, *Hos.* 12. last, *They bring forth Grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter*, Deut. 32. 33. Can the heavenly Husbandman feed on and delight in such Grapes? doth not his Soul loath and abhor them? but as to good Grapes, are they not *empty Vines*? Hos. 10. 1. These *fallow Grounds* are like the barren Fig-tree; *Christ* hungred and came to this Fig-tree, and found nothing on it but Leaves; this so provoked *Christ*, that he cursed it, *Mat.* 21. 18, 19. *and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever*; and presently the Fig-tree wither'd away. In what danger are Souls that are barren Fig trees? *Christ* may curse *them* so, that their Leaves may wither, their form of Religion decay and be utterly lost, a Sentence may go forth against them, *Cut them down, why should they any longer cumber the ground? Luke* 13. 7. Those that are not Trees for Fruit, shall be Trees for Fuel; *The Tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire*, Mat. 3. 10. The Ground that after Rain and Dew have come often on it, and yet it *bringeth forth only Briers* and Thorns, it is nigh to *cursing*, and its end is *to be burnt*, Heb. 6. 8.

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4. If you continue a Fallow Ground, you will bring forth Fruit only to Death, and fit your ſelves for Deſtruction, *Rom.* 7. 5. You will pile up fuel in the Infernal Tophet, and fill the Treaſury of God's wrath, *Rom.* 2. 5. as the cluſters are bitter, and ſo abhorred by God, ſo your Wine is the Poyſon of Dragons, and the cruel venom of Aſps, and ſo moſt fatal, pernicious and deſtructive to your ſelves. As Men now *drink in iniquity like water*, Job 15. 16. ſo they muſt ſhortly *drink of the wrath of the Almighty*, Job 21. 20. O therefore cry mightily to God, that he would remember you in your miſerable and loſt Eſtate. There is a ſweet Promiſe that God makes to the Mountain of *Iſrael*, Ezek. 36. 8, 9. *Behold I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and you ſhall be tilled, ſown, and yield your Fruit.* O plead this word with God, put him in remembrance of it: Confeſs you have long lain Fallow. Perhaps ſome of you have kept a Sabbath of Years; yea, are come to a great Sabbatical Year. Forty nine or Fifty Years you have ceaſed from Spiritual Tillage; you have been idle all this while and done no work for God; you have been barren, and have brought forth no Fruit to God; O will you not now ſend up ſtrong cries to Heaven? Will you not now wreſtle mightily with God, that he would be for you, and turn to you in Grace and Mercy, that you may be effectually filled, skilfully ſown, and plentifully bear Fruit to God?

Doct. 2. *It is the Duty of Unregenerate Men to break up their Fallow Ground: They ſhould not be idle,*

idle, or ſtand ſtill, or be contented with their preſent Barrenneſs, that God, who calls you to Act, can breathe Life, and put Strength into you, to enable you to work. As God in the firſt Creation ſpake to the Earth, and ſaid, Let it bring forth Graſs, Herbs, and Fruit-bearing Trees, and it was ſo as the Father commanded, and the Son was the Word; ſo the Holy Ghoſt executed all. The Earth had no Seed of Graſs, or Herbs, or Roots of Trees, within it ſelf, or power to bring them forth, yet Gods Word was as Seed then, and gave a productive Power to the Earth: So God ſaid, Let the waters bring forth Fiſh to move in them, and Fowl that may fly above the waters and earth, in the open Firmament of Heaven; *and tho' the waters had no ſpawn of Fiſh, or Eggs of Fowl in them, yet the Word of God was powerful, effectual, and ſoon fulfilled. So Chriſt is the Reſurrection and the Life, and the beginning of the Creation of God; he can quicken dead Souls, recover and heal a withered arm and hand,* Mark 3.5. *ſo that it ſhall be ſtretched out, and enabled to hold the Plough, and carry on this Spiritual Tillage, that is required and called for in the Text.*

For the proſecuting of the Doctrine, three things are to be inquired into. 1. What it is to break up our Fallow Ground. 2. How, or by what means it muſt be broken up. 3. Why it is neceſſary it ſhould be broken up.

1. *What is it to break up our Fallow ground?* I Anſwer: It is to be ſoundly convinced of, deeply affected with, throughly to be broken and humbled for Sin, and the danger and miſery of our Natural State. This is a Work hard, bitter,

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and grievous to Nature, to ſet God's Plow into our very Souls; to cut and wound them, to make deep and long Furrows in the very Soil of our Hearts. We read of *renting of the heart*, Joel 2.13. and of a *broken heart and contrite ſpirit*, Pſ. 51.17. This *breaking up Fallow Ground*, is expounded in the next Verſe to the Text, by *mens circumciſing themſelves to the Lord, and taking away the foreskin of the heart*, Jer. 4.4. This cutting off the foreskin of the Heart, is cutting up the Turff of our Soil, that hinders the good Seed from taking deep root downwards, and ſpringing upwards. The *Jews* were circumciſed in Infancy, but the thing ſignified doth not always go along with the Sign, they yet wanted the internal and nobleſt part of that Ordinance, they were circumciſed in fleſh, but yet *uncircumciſed in heart*, Jer 9. laſt. Tho' Circumciſion in the Fleſh was an external act, whereby Men did acknowledge them *Jews*, and Members of the viſible Church, yet the Circumciſion of the Heart is the Sign, and internal Note, whereby God doth recognize, and own Men to be vital Members of his Church. *The Lord thy God will circumciſe thine heart, that love the Lord thy God*, Deut. 30.6. God would give the inward and nobleſt part of this Ordinance. And if Circumciſion was a Sign and Seal of God's Circumciſing the Heart, it muſt needs be a Sign and Seal of the Covenant of Grace. Thoſe that do partake of the outward Sign of the Covenant, are thereby obliged to ſeek after the inward, and beſt part of that Ordinance they have paſſed under,

der, and have been the Subjects of. They are not to rest in this, That they are circumcised in the Eye, and account of Men, but they are to pass further, and circumcise themselves to the Lord; that is, so to circumcise themselves, that they may appear to, and be owned by God as circumcised. So they were to circumcise themselves, that they may be inclined towards, and devoted to the Lord. This Soul Circumcision, this taking away the Foreskin of the Heart, is the right *breaking up of our Fallow Ground.* The Act of Repentance and Faith is ours, but the Grace whereby we Repent and Believe, is from God and Christ, 2 *Tim.* 2. 25. *Acts* 5. 31. So it is our Duty to Circumcise our Hearts, but in all our Endeavours to perform it, we must look to the Promise of God, *Deut.* 30. 6. and eye the Grace of our Lord Jesus, who circumcises the Heart, in causing it to put off the Body of the sins of the Flesh, *Col.* 2. 11. Jesus Christ, tho' he had no Foreskin on his Heart, yet he was Circumcised, *Luk.* 2. 21. that he might fulfil all Righteousness in himself, and be obliged by this Ordinance to the great Work of Circumcising the Hearts of others, *Col.* 2. 11.

2. *How must Men break up their Fallow Ground?* I Answer: There must be a Plough to do this Work: There must be a keen and sharp Plowshare, that Men may be Converted, and return to be God's Husbandry. The Word is the Plow, considerations taken both from the Law and Gospel, must break and wound the Hearts of Men.

Men. *Moſes* is indeed a Plow-man, but Chriſt is ſaid to be the Seeds-man; he is the *Sower that went forth to ſow*, Matt. 13. 3. He that *ſowſ the good ſeed is the Son of Man*, Matt. 13. 37, 38. He doth not only ſow Doctrines, but Perſons. He doth beget a holy Seed, *Iſa.* 9. 6. He waſhes and renews by his Spirit. If Men were convinced of Sin by the Law, and not of Righteouſneſs by the Goſpel; if they were wounded, but had no knowledge of a Phyſician, of a Remedy, of a way of *Salvation*, this would drive Men to deſpair, ſink and overwhelm them with terrors. The Word muſt cut deep, it *muſt prick the heart*, Acts 2. 37. It muſt wound the Soul to the quick, that Men may be prepared for the healing Remedies, and ſweet Conſolations of Jeſus Chriſt: Weighty, humbling, awakening Conſiderations, muſt be put, and kept on the Heart, and ſink deep into the Soul; ſuch as theſe following Truths.

1. This ſhould affect and wound the Heart, that as we deſcend from the Firſt *Adam*, we are all born Fleſh. *John* 3. 6. *That which is born of the fleſh, is fleſh.* Tho' the Soul be a ſpirit in its nature, yet it is fleſh in its inclination, diſpoſition, ends, and aims. What a debaſing, humbling expreſſion is that, *My ſpirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man, for that he alſo is fleſh*, Gen. 6. 3. The Mind of Man is ſtrangely Carnalized, ſunk into, and ſwallowed up in the Fleſh; it doth not mind its own Concerns, or remember its own Intereſt, it is only a ſervant to, a *Steward* and *Caterer* for the Body; as if a Man ſhould be wholly taken up in thatch-

thatching, ſupporting, repairing of his Cottage, but ſhould neglect or forget to provide Food and Raiment for himſelf. O that Men ſhould gratify their ſenſes, pleaſe, pamper, and indulge their Fleſh, and put all their happineſs on an inch, on a moment of Time, and not regard *Spiritual Bleſſings in Heaven*, Eph. 1.2. or value a Feaſt in Glory. How dreadfully bad is it to make light, *Matt.* 22.5. of the Feaſt, that infinite Wiſdom contrived, and infinite Love hath provided? For Men not to regard the Purchaſe the *Son of God* hath made, the Ranſom he hath paid, the Legacies he hath bequeathed. A Carnal Creature ſees no worth or excellency, taſtes no ſweetneſs, takes no delight in *Spiritual* and *Eternal* Things; they are dry, ſapleſs, hungry Notions, yea, as vain fancies to him. Men underſtand only Carnally, there is fleſh in the mind, *Col.* 2.18. *Nicodemus*, tho' he was a Maſter and Teacher in *Iſrael*, yet did not underſtand the Doctrine of Regeneration, but thought Chriſt meant a Man muſt enter a ſecond time into his *Mothers Womb*, and be born again from thence, *John* 3.3,4,9. The Will and Affections alſo are Fleſh. When Chriſt did diſcourſe with the Woman of *Samaria* of Water for her Soul, ſhe puts a Carnal ſenſe on Chriſt's words; ſhe deſires that Chriſt would give her of this water, that ſhe might come no more to that Well to draw, but might be eas'd of a great labour and trouble.

2. This Truth ſhould wound the Heart, That by Nature we are *ſpiritually dead in ſins and treſpaſſes*, Eph.

Eph.2.1,4. not only ſick, but dead in ſin. That foreskin that is on our Hearts, is the very death of our Souls, *Col.*2.13. *You that were dead in the uncircumciſion of your fleſh.* This foreskin diſaffects us to, alienates us from, prejudices us againſt God, and ſpiritual things. *The body is dead by reaſon of ſin*, Rom.8.10. And the Soul is dead in ſin. By the offence of one, that is, the Firſt *Adam*, many be dead. Theſe many are all that deſcend from *Adam* by Natural Generation, *Rom.*5.15. *By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation*, Rom 5.18. Men are dead under a ſpiritual, and condemned to an eternal death. Men walk indeed (tho' ſpiritually dead) but it is only contrary to God, *Levit.*26.40. Men act indeed, but they only do dead Works, *Heb.*6.1. *Heb.*9.14. Men muſt repent of, and from theſe dead works, and the blood of Chriſt muſt cleanſe Conſcience from them. O what a dreadful State is this, for Conſcience to be loaded with, and burden'd under dead Works! Thoſe may well be called dead Works, that are the fruits of ſpiritual Death, and the ſeeds of eternal Death; as we call Pond, or Ditch Water, dead Water, becauſe the Pond or Ditch have no ſpring in them to feed the Water, ſo the beſt Works of unregenerate Men may be called dead Works, becauſe they have no Holy Spring, or Fountain, of their Actions. They are deſtitute of Knowledge, *there is none that underſtandeth*, Rom.3.11. *Hoſ.*4.1. *They do not truſt in God*, Zeph.3.2. *They have not the love of God in them*, John 5.42. Knowledge, Faith, and Love,

Love, are the root and spring of all living works, but for want of these, the *Works of unregenerate Men are dead*, they are empty Vines, sinfully barren, *Hos.* 10.1. yet abound in corrupt fruit, *Deut.* 32.32,33. they only *bring forth fruit to death*, Rom. 7.5. such as renders them more guilty of, liable, and obnoxious to death. When *Adam* fell, contracted guilt, and corrupted our nature; thence *we were made sinners*, Rom. 5.19. and *unregenerate men*, while they continue so, ever since they were born, have been Sin-makers. This is their only Trade and Imployment, 1 *John* 3.4. πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν; it is properly render'd, *He that maketh sin is the servant of sin.* The word in composition signifies to *work at a Trade*. *Aquila*, *Priscilla*, and *Paul*, were σκηνοποιοι Tentmakers. This is a shameful and woful Trade, in Thought, Word, and Deed, to be a *Sin maker*. O reflect on this with Self-abhorrency. that as soon as you were born you were made Sinners, and ever since have been *Sin-makers*. An *unregenerate man, is still out of the evil Treasure of his heart bringing forth evil things*, Matt. 12.34. Out of the Bullion of *Original Sin*, is still coining *Actual Sin*; and tho' evil things in Words and Actions, are still brought forth out of this *evil Treasure*, yet this doth not lessen, waste, or diminish, but still more increases the *evil Treasure* of the Heart.

3. *Unregenerate Men are Children of Wrath by Nature*, Ephes. 2.3. *They are conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity*, Ps. 51.5. *Born flesh*, John 3.6. God hath therefore a Controversie with them, and just displeasure

pleasure against them. As soon as they live Temporally, God hath provocations to destroy them Eternally; God seeth then the malignity that lurks, the enmity against him that is lodged in the Soul. As the Potters Vessel, mentioned in *Jer.* 18.3,4. was marred in making, so when men are shapen, and formed in the Womb, they are marred, defiled, and deformed with sin; a Leaven is then laid in the very Meal of our Faculties, Poyson is then dropt into our Souls: a Disease, a Plague of Leprosie, is derived to us, together with our Nature, so that we are hateful to, *Ps.* 3 3. and haters of God, *Rom.* 1.30. By reason of that Traiterous and Rebellious Nature that God then saw in us, it had been no injustice in God, or wrong to us, if Children of wrath had soon been *made Vessels of wrath for ever*, Rom. 9.22.

4. Sinful Men heap up more wrath, more inflame, and increase Divine Displeasure against themselves. *The Hipocrites in heart do heap up wrath*, Job 36.13. Those that remain hard-hearted, and impenitent, *do treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God*, Rom. 2.5. Such do bring more Fuel to the Fire, and Oil to the flame of Divine Displeasure, that it may burn more hotly, and fiercely against them. God is *angry with the wicked every day*, or, as some render it, *all the day long*, Ps. 7.11. They are still doing somewhat more to grieve and provoke God. Sinners are altogether become filthy, or stinking, as it is in the margin, *Psal.* 14.3. What stinking thoughts, desires, words and actions, do

daily come up into God's noſtrils. God complains, *Iſ.*65.5. that they were a *ſmoke in his noſtrils, a fire that did burn all the day*; as when ſomething very noiſom and ſtinking is burnt, it gives great offence to the Noſe. And as the ſins of men do always ſtink in God's Noſtrils, ſo they cry loud in God's Ears, to kindle more wrath againſt them, and pluck down more vengeance on them. As the ſins of *Sodom* did make a great cry in God's Ears, *Gen.*18.20. the ſins of men are as ſo many Accuſers of, and Witneſſes againſt them, before the Tribunal of God. *Iſ.*59.12. *Our ſins teſtifie againſt us.*

5. *Men are unmindful of God, and Enemies to him,* 1. They are unmindful of God, *Deut.*32.18. *Of the Rock that begot thee, thou art unmindful, and haſt forgotten God that formed thee.* God is not in all their thoughts; they are *without God in the world*, Epheſ.2.12. they call not on him, they draw not nigh to him; they have no delight in him. They are Atheiſts all the day long; yea, all their life long, as if there were no ſuch Being as God, or they had no need of him, had no buſineſs or concerns with him. Men and Women remember ſmall matters, but yet forget God. *Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people* (ſaith God) *have forgotten me days without number*, Jer.2.32. How great a ſin is it to forget God that is ſo near to us? *Acts* 27.27,28. Thoſe that are blind Creatures, may grope, and find out God, by feeling of him; *for in him we live, move, and have our being.* All the Creatures do declare,

clare, and preach God to us, *Psal.* 19. 1, 2, 3. These, as continual remembrancers, may present God to our thoughts. How great a sin is it, that men allow no room to God in their minds, and shut him out of their hearts, *who fills heaven and earth?* Jer. 23. 24. That the precious Cabinet of the Mind should be filled only with the Dung of unclean, vain, worldly thoughts, but not entertain Meditations of God and Christ. 2. *Men are enemies to God*, Rom. 8. 7. The Carnal Mind is not said to be an enemy, but enmity to God. Enemies may be reconciled, but enmity can never be reconciled, but must be destroy'd. Men are Enemies to God in their minds, through wicked works, or by *their minds being set wholly on wicked works*, Col. 1. 21. The mind is either *inventing of evil things*, and finding out new sins, *Rom.* 1. 30. or projecting and contriving how to justifie the flesh, *and to fulfil the lusts of it*, Rom. 13. ult. Or the mind is taken up in cloaking and covering of sin; it finds out excuses, it sews the Fig-leaves of Pretenses together, to hide the filthiness and deformity of sin from the Eye of Conscience, and so to blind and deceive their own Souls. How should this afflict and wound our Souls, that we have been enemies to him, that is the chief good, to a glorious, infinite, eternal Being? who spake the World out of nothing, and could as easily speak us, and all things else, into their First Nothing again? But because men are ready to deny this Charge, and plead not Guilty to it, *Paul* proves mens enmity against God, by their opposition,

ſition to, and rebellion againſt the Law of God. *The carnal mind is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be,* Rom. 8. 7.

6. *Men are Children and Captives of the Devil.* 1. They are Children of the Devil. But Men will ſtart, and deny ſuch an Accuſation. The *Jews* affirmed, *That God was their Father,* John 8. 41. but Chriſt aſſerted that which was very different from, and contrary to this, *John* 8. 44. *Ye are of your father the devil, and the luſts of your father ye will do.* Was not Chriſt's Teſtimony to be credited rather than theirs? Tho' Men, as to their natural Life, proceed and deſcend from their Parents, yet as to their corrupt Life, they iſſue from Satan. The enmity, and malignity of their Souls againſt God, his People, and his Laws, this is the very image and likeneſs of Satan. The *Jews* hated the Truth that Chriſt preached, abhorred him, and were inclined to murder him; and theſe were the very Luſts of Satan. Whoredom, Gluttony, and Drunkenneſs, are groſs and brutiſh Luſts; but the moſt Spiritual ſins, as Pride, Envy, Hatred, are properly the Luſts of Satan. In theſe Men do moſt reſemble him; theſe are the very Lineaments of his Face. It is ſaid of wicked men, *Pſal* 58. 4. *That their poyſon is like the poyſon of a ſerpent.* This ſeems to be a plain alluſion to the firſt ſin: When the Devil under, and by a Serpent, tempted our Firſt Parents, then he did diſtil his Venom, and drop his Poiſon into them, when his word was believed, and his ſuggeſtions embraced. He miſrepreſented God as

envious of their Good, of their higher Knowledge, and of their sweetest Pleasures and Delights. He did set forth the Fruit of a Tree as the best, and most desirable Good, and to be preferred before the favour of God, and as if God's threatning was but a vain, and false word. This Poison of the Serpent we may discern, and find in our own Souls, and therefore while *unregenerate* may be justly charged to be Satans Children, yea, the Souls of Sinners are the House that Satan dwells, and the Shop that he works in, *they have Members*, Col. 3. 5. that God never made, they have *Lusts that he never kindled*, 1 John 2. 15, 16. and are under a *Law*, Rom 7. 21, 23. that God never enacted; but these Members, Lusts, and Law, came from Satan. 2. *Unregenerate Men are the Devils Vassals, Slaves, and Captives.* Satan did but present *Job*'s Cattle as a desirable Booty and Prey, and blow up the Fire of their Lusts, and the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans* quickly make an Inroad, Invade *Job*'s Possession, and take away his Cattle, *Job* 1. 15, 17. Satan carries Men on in the Chanel of their own corrupt Nature, and on the violent stream and torrent of their own Lusts. Men are said to walk according to Satan, *Ephes.* 2. 2. but how is this? The Apostle tells us in the next Verse, *Eph.* 2. 2, 3. *Fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind.* They think they have nothing to do with Satan, when they obey him in serving of their Lusts. *The Devil takes men captive at his will*, 2 Tim. 2. last. yet he leads men captive by their own Wills.

The very liberty of their Wills is inſlaved. Sinners yield, and give up their own corrupt Wills, and carnal Affections, as ſo many Cords for Satan to lead them by to Hell. Satan finds Luſts in us, as Chains to bind us, as Snares to hold us; ſhall not this conſideration deeply wound the Souls of Men, that they ſide and join with Satan, to ſeduce and deſtroy themſelves? *Men cloſe their eyes*, Matt. 13.15. And *Satan blinds their minds*, 2 Cor. 4.4,5. and ſo they put the greateſt cheat on their own Souls. They ſee not the Good that Satan deprives them of, and the Miſery and Deſtruction he brings on them.

7. *Unregenerate Men are Priſoners*, Iſ. 42.7. Iſ. 49. 9. *they ſit in darkneſs*; and *are bound with chains*, Iſ. 61.1. and dwell in the Priſon Houſe. They are under a ſentence of condemnation, *John* 3.18. *He that believes not is condemned already*. And they are under a fear of a day of Execution, *Heb.* 2.15. *Through the fear of death they are all their life time ſubject to bondage*. How much are Sinners and Hipocrites affrighted? What dreadful Exclamations do they make? Who among us ſhall dwell with devouring Fire? Who among us ſhall dwell with everlaſting Burnings? O what bitter cries of deſtruction, *Iſ.* 35.5. will Sinners lift up, when they ſhall ſee the whetted Sword of Juſtice hanging over their Heads, and their Feet at the brink of the bottomleſs Pit! *When their eyes ſhall ſee their deſtruction, and they ſhall be brought forth to the day of wrath*, Job 21.20,30.

8. O let this wound your Souls, *that you go ſo*

far

far from God, Jer. 2. 5. *and fly so fast.* Hos. 7. 13. *Woe unto them*, 1. *For they have fled from me*; as if they could not go too far, or hasten too fast, from the Father of Mercies, from the Fountain of Life. And Sinners are very unwilling to return; *they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return*, Jer. 8. 5. *They stop their ears, and make their hearts like an adamant-stone, lest they should hear the words of the law of the Lord of hosts*, Zech. 7. 11, 12. They have an Iron Sinew, a Brow of Brass, and a Heart of Stone, that will not melt or relent, *Is.* 48. 4. when God draws near to them with beams of Light, commands of Obedience, and offers of Grace. *Job* 21. 14. *They bid him depart*, as if they had no need of God, owed no homage, obedience, or subjection to him; as if they could stand, tho' he did not support them; as if they could chuse their own way, and order their steps, tho' he did not direct them, and they could be happy tho' they did not enjoy him. *They cast God himself, and his Word too, behind their backs*, Ezek. 23. 35. When Men bid God depart, is not this to pluck away his props and supports from their Building? To banish Heaven from themselves, and to execute a great part of Hell on themselves? And to provoke God to bid them depart from him, as cursed Creatures, into everlasting Fire? *Matt.* 25. 41. They that are alienated from the Life of God, and estranged from Communion with him, how can they hope to be for ever with him? 1 *Thes.* 4. 17.

9. This should affect, and awe your Souls,

that you are ſtill under God's Eye, and do evil in his ſight, *Pſal.*51.4 *The ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings*, Prov.5.21. *There is no darkneſs, or ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves* Job 34.22. This is peculiar to God, that Malefactors are always in the preſence, and under the eye of him as their Judge; and he is a Witneſs againſt them for all the Crimes they commit. *The Lord be witneſs againſt you*, 1Sam.12.5.

10. How ſhould this cut your Hearts, *that all your ſins are marked*, Jer.2.22. *and all your crimes are written before him*, Iſ.65.6. The great King of the whole World, writes the Chronicles of all the Lives and Actions of his Subjects; all that Men ſpeak, think, or do, is Recorded in his Book, *Rev.*20.12. and Conſcience keeps a Counter-part of the Record. *Their ſin is graven as with a pen of iron, and the point of a diamond, in the table of their heart*, Jer.17.1.

11. God can make Malefactors to appear, and preſent Delinquents before his Tribunal, they cannot fly, they cannot hide; *As for thoſe mine Enemies, that would not have me to reign over them, bring them before me*, Luke 19.27. This is proper and peculiar to God, that he can make all tranſgreſſors to appear; and how dreadful will this be, that they muſt appear, 2 *Cor.* 5.10. where yet *they cannot appear with any hope or confidence?* 1 *Pet.* 4 15. *where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appear? They muſt ſtand before the Judgment-ſeat*

of

of *Christ*, Rom. 14. 10. yet *the ungodly shall not stand in the Judgment*, Psal. 1. 5. O what terror may this strike into Men, that *God will bring them into judgment*, Eccles. 11. 9. and God will also bring *all their secret actions into judgment*, Eccl. 12. 14. God will bring all the hidden things of darkness to light.

12. Impenitent Sinners *shall be punished with an everlasting destruction, which shall come from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power*, 2 *Thes.* 1. 9. The same Face that shines a Heaven into the Souls of Saints, shall frown a Hell into the Consciences of the Wicked; the same Arm that punishes, shall support the punished still to endure more Torments: as God will burn against, and on Chaff, Briers, Thorns and Tares, so he will preserve the Fuel, and uphold it to Eternity. *Who knows the power of God's anger*, Psal. 90. 11? how miserable he can render a Creature, that he fills up as a Vessel with his Wrath, that he treads on as a footstool, and shoots at as a Mark? God asks *Job*, *Hast thou entred into the Springs of the Sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the deep?* could he tell how deep the great Sea was? could he come to the bottom of it? *Job* 38. 16. So it will be said to us, Can you by the line and plumbet of your Reason sound and find out the bottom of the deep Sea of the Wrath of God? *Tophet* is deep, there is no coming up out of it, *Isa.* 30. ult. *The Gulf that is fixed is wide*, there is no passing over it, *Luke* 16. 26. And these things are near, our breath is in our Nostrils, ready to go

out,

out, and the Judge ſtands at the Door ready to come in. As the accuſations and threatnings of the Law ſhould be a Plough, ſtriking home and cutting deep into our Hearts, ſo the Mercy of God in Chriſt, and the Grace revealed in the Goſpel, ſhould exceedingly wound and break our Hearts. How amazing is this, that when we had made God to ſerve with our Sins, and wearied him with our Iniquities, *Iſa.* 43.24. that the Son of God ſhould take on him the form of a Servant, to ſuffer, to ſatisfie for, and purge away our Iniquities *Pſal.*2.76. *Heb.*1. 3? O, that when God, as a Creator, Preſerver, Benefactor, had been by our Luſts debaſed to be a meer Servant, and Satan exalted to be the Prince, yea, the *God*, of the World, *John* 12. 3. 2 *Cor.* 4 4,5. that the Son of God ſhould humble himſelf to be a *Servant* to his own Law, as a Sacrifice to his Father's Juſtice, to make an end of the guilt of Sin! O that Chriſt ſhould be ſold to redeem us! that he ſhould be wounded to heal us! that he ſhould be arreſted, arraign'd and condemn'd to juſtifie us! ſhould not this make Hearts of ſtone to relent and break? O, that God ſhould complain, that he is *broken with our whoriſh Hearts*, Ezek. 6. 9. yet Chriſt, to expiate and put away the guilt of theſe Whoredoms, ſhould complain, that *Reproach had broken his heart*, Pſ. 69. 20. We had loaded God with our ſins and provocations, as a Cart is preſſed under the ſheaves, *Amos* 2.13. O how amazing is it, that God ſhould lay all our ſins on Chriſt, *Iſa.* 53. 6. and load him with our penal-

ties,

ties and punishments! that our Debt should be exacted of him, our Curse executed on him! that he should be as the *Manna* pounded in the Mortar! that as *a cluster of Grapes* he should be bruised in the Wine-press of the Wrath and Justice of God! that as a Porter, or bearer of burdens, he should have our Iniquities bound on him and then bear them quite away. The Hebrew word סבל is used of Christ, *Isa.* 53. 4. *He hath carried our sorrows*; and hence he that is a Porter, or bearer of burdens, is called, 2 *Chron.* 2. 27. איש סבל *a man of burden.* This Name fitly doth agree to our Lord Jesus, that he was *a Man of burden*: Never did any one bear so vast a load, so great a burden: We found out Inventions to inslave our selves, *Eccl.* 7. ult. and God found out a Ransom, to redeem and set us at liberty, *Job* 33. 24. We hated him without a cause, and he loved us freely, and without a cause; how should this Grace melt our hard, and warm our cold Hearts with love to God? shall we continue in the torrid Zone of Enmity and Lust, when Believers are brought into and dwell in the torrid Zone of Love? It is now possible that our Wilderness may blossom as a Rose, that our dry Ground may be water'd, improv'd, and inrich'd, *Isa.* 35. 1. & 44. 3, 4. Enemies may be reconcil'd, dead Souls quicken'd, and such as have been Satan's Children and meer Strangers to God, may be adopted, and taken into his Family.

3 *Q. Why must our fallow Ground be broken up?* I answer, 1. That our carnal Confidence in our selves

ſelves may be mortified and rooted out; our Pride muſt be abated, our high Mountain of carnal Confidence muſt be level'd, *Iſa.* 40. 4. How many do truſt in themſelves that they are *righteous*, *Luke* 15. 8. and this is directly contrary to believing in Chriſt, *Gal.* 2.16. that they might be juſtified: Thoſe that have ſome Planks, ſome pieces of the wreck of the Fall, to float and ſwim on, will not deſire and cry to be taken up into Chriſt, God's Ark of Salvation; they that build on their Morality, Form of Godlineſs, and Religious Performances, are too rich to beg an Alms and receive a *gift of Righteouſneſs* from *Chriſt*, *Rom.* 5.17. Thoſe that are ſhut up under Sin and Condemnation, will lay hold of and embrace the free Promiſe of *Salvation* and *Life*, *Gal.* 3.22. Thoſe that highly account of their own qualifications and attainments, do think they have valuable Gains, *Phil.* 3. 6,7,8. that they have that which will gain them the favour of God, acceptance with him, a Right and Title to Eternal life: They judge themſelves to be whole, that their Souls were never ſick or diſeaſed, *Mat.* 8.12. they think they have lived in ſubjection to God their Father, and in obedience to his Commands, *Luke* 15.29. that they have ſerved him when others did rebel againſt him, and that therefore they *need no Repentance*, Luke 15. 7. How many do account themſelves as fruitful and flouriſhing Meadows, that *naturally* bear a Crop without plowing or ſowing. Thoſe that do value their own civil and unblamable life, and highly account

count of their form of godliness, they think it very hard, yea, judge it very unreasonable and injurious to them, that their green and flourishing Turf should be plowed up and turned in, as if it were of no worth and value; they think they have something of their own to recommend them to God's Holiness, and secure them from his Justice; their *fallow Ground* must be therefore broken up, to root out this carnal Confidence, and to convince them, that they are far from Righteousness, and that nothing they have done will be approved by God's Touchstone, or hold in his Balance.

2. Our *fallow Ground* must be broken up, that the Briers and Thorns that grow in us may be wounded, cut, and rooted up. The Word of God should be a grubbing Plough, to tear up our Thorns; a circumcising Knife, to cut off the fore-skin of our Hearts, *Jer.* 4. 4. we must suffer in our Flesh, even in our corrupt Nature, 1 *Pet.* 4. 1. Satan's works in us must be destroy'd, 1 *Joh.* 3. 8. our Navel must be cut, *Ezek.* 16. 4. we must be separated from the first *Adam*, we must be as Branches cut out of the *wild Olive*, *Rom.* 11. 17, 24. To *break up* our *fallow Ground*, is thus expounded in the next Verse, *Jer.* 4. 4. *Circumcise your selves to the Lord, take away the foreskin of your heart*; this is as Thorns that choak the Word, that draw away the strength and vigor of the Heart, and so starve the Word of God.

3. Men must *break up* their *fallow Ground*, that they may be meet and fit Patients for Jesus Christ.

This

This *Heavenly* Physician hath no Practice, but on humbled and broken-hearted Sinners, these are they he applys his Remedies to, and works Cures on: He was appointed and design'd to bind up *the broken in heart*, *Isa.* 61. 1. none others do think they need Christ's Help, prize his Remedies, or value his Consolations: Those that are whole, that never saw the Plague of their Hearts, or groan'd under the weight of their Guilt, the burden of their Sins, do not think they need a Physician. Christ hath few Patients and little Practice in the World, because Men are not sick of Sin, wounded or broken for it.

4. Our *fallow Ground* must be plow'd and *broken up*, that our Soil may be fitted to receive the good Seed of the Gospel: a broken Christ is both suited and welcome to a broken Heart. Christ crucified is the grain of Corn that sows the whole Field of God, *John* 12. 24. with 1 *Cor.* 1. *We preach Christ crucified*, saith *Paul*: *Christ is the lilly of the valleys*, Cant. 2. 1. His Seed grows and thrives only in poor Ground; the Poor have the Gospel preached to them, *Mat.* 11. 5. these taste the sweetness of it, are cheer'd by its comforts, are cast into its mould; the Seed takes root in broken Ground, it prospers, it thrives in humbled Souls: how do sinking and drowning Sinners catch at and hold fast the Cord of the Promise cast out to them? Those that are pursued by their own Guilt, the Wrath of God, the Threatnings and Terrors of the Law, how much do they hasten their pace, and fly for refuge, to take

take hold of the Hope ſet before them? Thoſe that are ſcorched by the ſenſe they have of the Wrath of God, how highly do they prize, and how joyfully and delightfully do they ſit under Chriſt's ſhadow, *Cant.* 2. 3.

5. Men muſt break up their *fallow Ground*, that they may ſeek the Lord in good earneſt. We may obſerve how theſe two things are join'd together, *Break up your fallow Ground, for it is time to ſeek the Lord, Hoſ.* 10. 12. Theſe two things ſeem to be intimated in the words, 1. That in *breaking up* our *fallow Ground* we do *ſeek the Lord.* 2. That none will *ſeek the Lord* ſincerely and fervently, but thoſe that break up their *fallow Ground*; ſuch are quickly convinced, and ſoon made ſenſible how neceſſary it is to *ſeek the Lord*, that vile Weeds, that Vices natural to us may be rooted out, and that ſupernatural Graces and Truths may be grafted on and planted in them. The *Pelagians* (as *Auſtin* tells us) aſſerted, That *Vitia ingenerata extirpari prorſus incredibile eſt*: they argued thus againſt Original Sin, That *if Vices were naturally bred in us, and born with us, it was altogether an incredible thing that they ever would or could be rooted out.* But God, the great Husbandman, can cleanſe the Soul of them, and mortifie Vice and Luſts that are natural to us, *John* 15. 3. *You are clean, through the word that I have ſpoken to you.* Whoredom was a Vice ſo natural to the *Corinthians*, that κορινθιάζειν, to act the part of a *Corinthian*, was to be a Whoremaſter; and the Apoſtle *Paul*, in his Epiſtle to them ſaith,

Some

Some of you were Fornicators, Adulterers, but you are washed, you are sanctified, 1 Cor. 6. 10, 11. *Austin* himself was naturally much inclin'd to Fornication, yet the Grace of God so changed him, that he ever after became chast in a single life. God can unmake Men, as to their sinful frame, 1 *Pet.* 2. 24. ἀποτενόμενοι, being unmade *to sin, you may live to righteousness.* God can create Men in Christ Jesus to good works, *Eph.* 2. 10. He can put his Law, his Fear, his Spirit into the Hearts of Men, that natural Vices shall be rooted out, and supernatural Graces shall be planted in the Soul. They that break up their *fallow Ground* will *seek the Lord*, and continue seeking of him, till he come and rain Righteousness on them: this is a Rain of Seed-Righteousness; it is wonderful that God can rain Seed, rain Righteousness that will sow the Soul, and make it fruitful: as when the Husbandman hath plowed and sowed his Ground, he needs to *seek the Lord* to rain on it, that the Seed may root and spring up, so those that plow and *break up* their *fallow Ground* have need to pray, that God would rain Holiness and Righteousness to sow them. *Hos.* 2. ult. God saith, *I will sow them to my self in the Earth.*

6. Men must *break up* their *fallow Ground*, that they may abound in the Work of the *Lord*, and *be filled with the fruits of Righteousness*, 1 *Cor.* 15. ult. *Psal.* 1. 11. A *fallow Ground* is in a great measure unprofitable; it bears Thorns and Thistles, but a plowed and sowed Ground yields a good crop of Corn: none do bear Fruit to God

but

but thoſe that are born again of the Word and Spirit, and made *Trees of Righteouſneſs*, Iſa. 61. 3. will be filled with the Fruits of Righteouſneſs, walk with, and live to God, *Gen.* 5. 24, 25. If our *fallow Ground* be not broken up, our form of Godlineſs will wither and decay, Thorns will famiſh and ſtarve the good Seed, that at laſt they will be twice dead, pluck'd up by the Roots, *Jude* 12. The *Iſraelites* that did not conquer and root out the Heathen Nations, are ſaid to dwell among the *Canaanites*, *Judg.* 4. 33. theſe did cut the *Iſraelites* ſhort, and much annoy them, and keep them down; ſo the natural crop of Thorns doth much annoy, and hinder any good Seed that is caſt in among them, obſtruct its growth, that it neither roots deep, nor ſprings up to any height.

7. Men muſt plow up their *fallow ground*, that they may have a plentiful and joyful Harveſt at laſt. It is very deſirable to ſow to the Spirit, and to reap Everlaſting Life, *Gal.* 6 5. *To have our fruit to holineſs, and the end everlaſting life*, Rom. 6. 22. to bear Fruit that will abound to our account, *Phil.* 4. 17. Tho' we have not evened with God, and diſcharg'd our Debt, yet God begins a new Account, and writes himſelf Debtor to his People for their Fruits of Holineſs, and of Love; Saints that ſow in Tears, ſhall reap in Joy; they that go forth weeping, bearing precious Seed, ſhall come again with Joy, and

bring their Sheaves with them, *Pſal.* 126. 5, 6. Though Religion may ſeem not only a barren and unprofitable, but a hurtful thing in the Eye of the World; yet at laſt there ſhall appear a vaſt difference between thoſe that fear God, and thoſe that fear him not, *Malac.* 3. ult. when the Righteous ſhall ſhine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father, and the Tares ſhall burn in a Furnace of unquenchable Fire; when Chriſt ſhall be glorified in the Salvation of the Saints, and in the Deſtruction of the Wicked, 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 10. *Ezek.* 25. 22. Thoſe that pleaſe God do ſow in a fruitful Soil; they will in this life receive a hundred fold, notwithſtanding Perſecutions from the World, and at laſt will *inherit eternal joy and life*, Mark 10. 30.

9. If we plow not up our *fallow Ground*, God may let looſe dreadful and cruel Plowmen on us. It is ſaid, *Zion ſhall be plowed as a Field*, Micah 3. ult. Enemies may plow on our Backs, and make their Furrows both deep and long, *Pſal.* 129. 3. How have the Backs of *Proteſtants* been cruelly plowed in *France* for about Twelve Years laſt paſt? God threatens, in *Hoſea* 10. 11. that *Judah* ſhould plow; they ſhould ſerve their Enemies in and under hard bondage. I have been credibly inform'd, that in *Barbary* ſome *Chriſtian Slaves* have been put into Harneſſes, and being lockt in,

in, have been forced to plow the Ground. God ſeems to allude to ſuch a thing, that *Judah* ſhall ſuffer as hard and grievous things, as if he were put to Plow. To draw God's Plow is beneficial and honourable Work, but to draw mens Plow will be bitter and grievous: yea, if you neglect to *break up your fallow Ground*, God will plow your Souls, make deep and long Furrows in Conſcience to Eternity.

10. Thoſe that will not plow up their *fallow Ground*, ſhall at laſt beg for an Alms of Mercy, and be rejected. The Sluggard will not plow, by reaſon of the cold; therefore ſhall he beg in Harveſt, and have nothing. Spiritual Sluggards have many Excuſes and Pretences to ſhift off this plowing Work, but when the Harveſt comes they will be in a very bad and woful ſtate. *Solomon* ſpeaks of it as a great Evil for a Father to waſte his Eſtate by evil Courſes, *and to beget a Son, and there is nothing in his hand*, Eccl. 5. 14. he is Heir only to Poverty and Beggery. But it is a great deal worſe for a Man to be born into Eternity, and to have no Good in his Hand, in his Soul. Thoſe that toil about the World ſhall carry away nothing of their labour in their hand, *Eccleſ.* 5. 15. but if you labour for God, *your Works will follow you*, Revel. 14. 13. and the ſweet Fruit of them will be enjoy'd for

ever. But this is not the only Evil, that ſpiritual Sluggards will have nothing of Good, but God will *thunder againſt them, and rain fire and brimſtone on them for working of Iniquity*, Pſal. 11. 6. As when God was diſpleas'd with *Iſrael*, he ſent *Thunder* and *Rain* in *Wheat-harveſt*, 1 *Sam.* 12. 17, 18. So when Sluggards have vainly hoped to reap a Harveſt of Happineſs, God will thunder againſt them, pour down his Wrath, and execute Vengeance on them. How earneſtly and importunately will Sluggards beg for Mercy, but all in vain, they will cry, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, Matt. 7. 21, 22, 23. but He will profeſs that which is very contrary to their Profeſſions and Hopes, *Then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you, depart from me ye that work Iniquity.* In the 13th of *Luke*, *v* 27. it is thus expreſſed, *Depart from me all ye workers of Iniquity:* which intimates, that Chriſt will be moſt juſt and impartial; he will no more regard, yea, he will rather much more abhor *workers of Iniquity*, than thoſe without the Church; both ſhall be diſown'd and rejected by Jeſus Chriſt. Theſe Sluggards will begin Harveſt for ſome ſpiritual Bread, for a Place in the Kingdom, but they ſhall be thruſt out, and enjoy no Good to Eternity.

10. It is a dreadful Curſe denounced on the Ground of Mount *Gilboa*, by *David*, 2 *Sam.* 1. 21. *Let there be no fields of Offerings there:* that

that is, let those Mountains never be sow'd, or if sow'd, let them be barren: *Let there be no fields of Offerings there.* The *fine Flour* was offer'd on the Altar to God, of this the *Meat-offering* did consist, *Levit.* 2. 1, 2. This was a great honour to the Creatures, for *Meat-offerings* to be made to God of the fine Flour, and Drink-offerings of Wine. In this sense the Vine saith in *Jotham's* Parable, that it did by its *Wine chear the Heart of God*, Judg. 9. 13. Now if it be a Curse on the Ground not to bear Wheat, which will yield fine Flour, fit to be offer'd to God, how much sorer and more grievous Curse is it for the Souls of Men to be barren, not to be plow'd and sow'd, not to yield any Fruit that may be offer'd to God, and that he can take pleasure and delight in? Will you make light of this dreadful Curse? Will you pluck it, and continue it on your selves? Will you do nothing to please and glorifie God?

Use 1. This may reprove many formal and titular Christians, that do neglect this excellent Command, and do slight and omit this necessary Duty and Work of *breaking up their fallow Ground:* Instead of wounding and breaking their Hearts, they live in Pleasure, are wanton, and nourish their Hearts, as in a day of slaughter, that is, as in a great Feast-day, when there is a slaughter of the Creatures made to feast the Body, *Jam.* 5. 5. they please their

Fleſh, they gratifie and indulge their ſenſual Affections, they cannot bear or endure ſuch hard and grievous Work as this, to draw God's Plow, and with its Shear to cut deep Furrows and ſorely wound their own Hearts; they think it very unreaſonable to baniſh carnal Joy out of their Souls, to cloud their Souls with Sorrows, to load their Spirits with a ſenſible feeling of the Evils that they have done, and with the fear of the Puniſhment they have deſerv'd: how few do take God's part, do ſide with him, do plead his Cauſe againſt themſelves and their Luſts? Who do charge their Sins home on themſelves, and ſet forth their heinous and horrid Aggravations before God? Do not Men deal gently and tenderly with themſelves? Do they not leſſen and extenuate, rather than heighten, their Guilt in Filth, and careleſs of their Tranſgreſſions? If the Word doth perhaps touch or wound them, doth not Self-love, (as that *natural Balſam* Chyrurgeons and Phyſicians ſay is in the Body) quickly heal it again? Doth not Self flattery ſoon chear them again, and ſo cheat them? Their plowing is rather ſcratching the Earth, than ſtriking a deep Furrow; they know not the meaning, or they have no Experience of a broken Heart, of a contrite Spirit. This is indeed *a great thing*, for the Spirit of a Man to be bruiſed, and, as it were, ground to powder, under the weight of Sin committed, and the ſenſe of Puniſhment deſerved.

ved. It is ſaid, *Hoſ.* 5. 2. *The Revolters were profound to make ſlaughter*; but, alas! where are the Men and Women that are profound in wounding their Souls for *Sin*, and in making a ſlaughter of their *Luſts*? How is it to be lamented, that the Sword of God's Word doth not paſs through the Heart of the Old Man? that the Arrows of God do not cleave the Reins of Sinners, and pour out their very Gall? how few do outlaw their corrupt and vile Affections, and put them out of their protection, that they may be kill'd when or whereſoever they find, meet with them, or ſee them? But do not Men act quite contrary to this? When God ſhoots his *Arrows*, caſts his *Darts* at them, do they not take the Shield of Unbelief, and guard their baſe Luſts? Do they not quench the fiery Darts that God caſts at them? Is there not a great deal of Art and Labour uſed to enervate, to blunt, to diſpirit keen and cutting Truths, that they may not enter deep, that come too home and cloſe to their Hearts? They cannot endure that Conſcience ſhould be enlighten'd and awak'd, that its Tongue ſhould be looſed; this they think is intolerable, to raiſe a Storm within their own Breaſts, to diſturb their Peace, to deſtroy their Hopes, to let in Terrors to arreſt and overwhelm their Souls: They think they ſhall never recover Peace and Comfort, or have their Wounds heal'd again, if God's Plough ſhould cut them

to the very Heart: Doth not a ſhallow Furrow produce a ſlight Religion, and a ſuperficial Chriſtianity in the World? Inſtead of putting convincing Truths, inſtead of keeping awakening Thoughts and Meditations on their Hearts, they rather keep them off *at a diſtance*, and ſhut them out of their Souls. O where ſhall we find an humbled Sinner crying out thus, *I am the man that hath riſen up againſt God, I have broken his Yoke, and made his Laws void; I have burſt his Bonds, and caſt away his Cords from me; I, that am but a Worm, have dared to walk contrary to God, and have enter'd the Liſts with the Almighty; I, that am but a Potter's Veſſel, have challeng'd a Rod of Iron; I, that am but Chaff, Briars, and Thorns, have contended with devouring Fire, with eternal burnings; I have exalted my Folly againſt Infinite Wiſdom, and ſet up my perverſe, wicked, rebellious Will, in oppoſition to the holy Law, the righteous Will of God: though God bears up the frame of Heaven and Earth by the Word of his Power, and doth not faint under this great weight, yet I have laid a heavier burden on him, and cauſed him to complain, that He is wearied by my Sins,* Iſa. 43. 24. *and is preſſed under my Iniquities, as a Cart is preſſed under the Sheaves,* Amos 2. 13. How few *Ephraims* are there found thus bemoaning or impeaching themſelves? Men do indeed like to tread out the Corn, and eat the Fruits of Mercy, but will not follow the Plough, to convince

and

and humble themſelves for Iniquity. How ſtrange is it, that Perſons will nouriſh in themſelves hopes of a comfortable and plentiful Harveſt hereafter, yet will not now plow and *break up their fallow Ground*? Is it not an unreaſonable Preſumption, to look for a Harveſt, when there hath been no Ground plow'd, or Seed ſown?

Uſe 2. Examine your ſelves, Is your *fallow Ground* broken up? have you inclin'd your Hearts and ſet your Hands to God's Plough? Though the Earth doth not feel the Plough-ſhear, doth not know when the Husbandman doth till the Land, yet a Soul cannot be both a Plow-man and a plowed Ground, but it muſt needs be ſenſible of what is done on, and wrought within it ſelf. Have you ever been *pricked in Heart*? Acts 2. 37. Have God's Words been as Goads to prick you, as Nails to pierce you? Have the Truths of God been as a ſharp Plow-ſhear, cutting and wounding your Souls?

1. Did you ever come to your ſelves, and ſo make a right judgment concerning your ſelves and your own Eſtate, with reſpect to God and Eternity, *Luke* 15. 17. that you are poor, empty, naked Creatures, that you are but a dry Ground and barren Wilderneſs, like the Vineyard of the ſloathful Man, all over-

overgrown with *Thorns* and *Nettles*, Prov. 24. 30, 31 ? It would be bad for a Man to rent a great Farm, and yet not to have one Acre of Corn ſow'd on it; but is it not worſe for us, that hold our Souls and Bodies of God our great Landlord, to whom we owe a great Rent of univerſal Obedience to his Laws, and yet not to have one Faculty of our Souls ſow'd with precious Seed ? For our Minds and Wills not to be Tables with the Law of God; for our Veſſels to be empty, and deſtitute of ſpiritual Oyl; for our Meal not to be leavened by the Goſpel, and the Houſes of our Souls to be empty, and not inhabited by the Spirit of God ? Have we diſcern'd our ſelves to be empty Vines, barren Fig-trees, unprofitable Servants ? Our *fallow Ground* will never be broken up, till we are convinc'd how much we need to be plow'd and ſow'd.

2. Were our Souls ever rightly, duly, deeply affected with our woful and wretched State ? Are Hearts broken, our Spirits wounded, our *Souls as a bruiſed Reed* ? Iſaiah 42. 3. Hath the ſenſe of our guilt, and God's wrath, ſo fallen and ſeized on our ſpirits, as to grind them as it were to Powder ? *A prick in the heart is both painful and mortal*, Acts 2. 37. this wounds the Old Man to death. *How ſhall we, that are dead to ſin, live any longer therein !*

in? Rom 6. 2. If an Earthen Veſſel be broken to pieces, it can no more hold any Water, or ſerve for any uſe, as when it was whole. If our Old Man be Crucified, if the Body of Sin be Deſtroy'd, we cannot ſerve ſin as before. If a Ground be Plow'd deep, and the Roots of Weeds, that grew in it, be cut, they cannot flouriſh in that Ground as before.

3. *Have you received the ſeed of the Word, the Doctrine of the Goſpel gladly*? Acts 2. 41. Have the Tidings of Redemption, the News of Salvation, been welcome to you? And as a Noble, and Generous Cordial, revived your fainting and languiſhing Spirits? And as a Soveraign Balſam, healed your bruiſed, broken Hearts? Have you, as drowning Men, laid hold on the Promiſe of Salvation? As famiſhing Men, have you catched at the Bread of Life? Have you as weary, and heavy Laden Sinners, leaned on Chriſt? *Cant.* 8. 5. and taken hold of the Hope ſet before you? Have you, as a dry and thirſty Ground, drank in the ſpiritual Rain, and Dew from Heaven? *Heb.* 6. 18. And doth the ſeed, ſo received, ſanctify you? Doth the Word work effectually in your Souls? *Heb.* 6. 7. Doth it Leaven you, *John* 17. 19. with Holineſs, Spirituality, and Heavenly-mindedneſs? 1 *Theſ.* 2. 13.

4. *Doth*

4. *Doth the seed of the Word bring forth fruit in your hearts and lives?* Col. 1. 5, 6. *Do you shine in the world as lights, and hold forth the word of life?* Phil. 2. 15, 16. Is the sweet odour of your Ointments, and Garments smelt? Cant. 4. 10, 11.

USE 3. *I would Exhort you to this great Duty, O break your Fallow Ground.*

When *Adam* fell, and was turned out of the Earthly Paradise, it was necessary for him to become a Husband-man, and a Plow-man. *Gen.* 3. 23. *God sent him out of the Garden of Eden to Till the ground, from whence he was taken.* Bread could not be had without Plowing and Sowing; our Nature was corrupted and depraved; all Holiness and Righteousness so rooted out, that if we break not up our *Fallow Ground*, no seed can be sowed, or Fruit brought forth to God. To be spiritual Plow-men, is an Employment necessary for all Rich and Poor; Princes and Peasants, Noble-men, and those of low Degree, must all follow the Plow, must all attend to break up their *Fallow Ground*; this is a Work to be neglected by none, Men and Women must all prosecute and pursue it. For,

1. We are wholly useless, and altogether unprofitable, if we *continue a Fallow Ground.*

It

It is worſe with us, than with a Field that *lies Fallow*, that may bear ſome Herbage. I have been credibly informed of ſome Land, that have been ſowed once a Year, and mowed the next; ſo ſerviceable is the Earth to Man, but if Men *lie Fallow, they do no good*, Rom. 3. 12. They bring forth no Fruit to God; all their Religious, and Common Actions, are grievous and diſpleaſing to God. *The prayer of him that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, is an abomination to God*, Prov. 28. 9. *Yea, the plowing of the wicked is ſin*, Prov. 21. 4. *The ſacrifice of the wicked is an abomination*, Prov. 15. 8. *And the way of the wicked*, that is, his common Actions, *are ſin*, Prov. 15. 9. *That which they offer is unclean, and ſo is every work of their hands*, Hag. 2. 14. Thus they are altogether *unprofitable*, Rom. 3. 12.

2. *If you lie Fallow, you will grow worſe and worſe.* The Old Man grows more corrupt, *Epheſ.* 4. 22. As a dead Carkaſs doth putrify more and more, and become more noiſome, unſavory, and ſtinking, ſo it is with the Body of Death in us, *Rom.* 7. 24. The more a ground is neglected, the longer it lies *Fallow*, the more it is over-run with Briars and Thorns; The deeper the Weeds root in it, the more they over-run, over-ſpread, and eat out the heart of it: So here, the Mind grows more

more vain, more blind; the Heart is more hard, the Affections more ſenſual and carnal. It is ſaid of ſome, *That they have left off to take heed to the Lord*, Hoſ. 4. 10. *And that they leave off Righteouſneſs in the Earth*, Amos 5. 7. *Evil men, and ſeducers, wax worſe and worſe*, 2 Tim. 3. 13.

3. If you Plow not for God, you Plow for Satan. It is a woful thing to drive Satan's Plow. *Iſaiah* ſpeaks of ſome, *That draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were with a cart-rope*, Iſaiah 5. 18. It is a plain Alluſion to drawing in a Cart, or drawing of a Plow. O how ſad is it to be Satan's ſlaves, to draw his Plow? All the corrupt Reaſonings of Men, that God doth not ſee, obſerve, reſent their ſins; That he will never revenge them; that God's threatnings are but vain words, as a deſpicable eccho, *and the ſounding again of the mountains*, Ezek. 7. 7. Theſe are the Cords of Vanity by which Men draw ſin to themſelves; but though they are but Cords of Vanity, yet they draw as ſtrong, as if they were a thick Cart-rope. What bad Work do Satan's Plow-men, inſtead of breaking up their *Fallow ground? They break God's yoke, burſt his bonds*, Jer. 5. 5. *They brake the everlaſting Covenant*, Iſaiah 24. 5. *Break God's Statutes*, Pſal. 89 31. Yea, God himſelf complains, *That he is broken by their whoriſh heart*, Ezek. 6. 9.

6. 9. Thus ill are Men imploy'd, *that break not up their Fallow ground.*

4. *It is honorable to yield Fruit to God.* It is ſaid, *The profit of the earth is for all; the King himſelf is ſerved by the Field*, Eccleſ. 5. 9. It is moſt true, That the King of Glory is ſerved by a Field broken up, and ſowed. How honorable is it, *when our Prayer is the delight of God?* Prov. 15. 8. *And God delighteth in our way?* Pſal. 37. 23. *When our Offerings are pleaſant to the Lord?* Mal. 3. 4. *When we can invite Chriſt to come into his Garden, and eat of his pleaſant fruits*, Cant. 4. laſt. *When we treat him with the ſpiced Wine of the juice of our Pomegranate*, Cant. 8. 2. *When our voice is ſweet in Chriſt's ears, and our countenance is comely in Chriſt's eyes*, Cant. 2. 14. *It is for the glory of the Church, that Chriſt goes down to feed in the Gardens*, Cant. 6. 2.

5. It will be our advantage to break up our *Fallow ground.* God bids our firſt Parents, *to repleniſh the Earth, and ſubdue it*, Gen. 1. 28. That it is by Tillage they were to maſter the Earth, and compel it to ſerve them, and bear Fruit to them; ſo by breaking up our *Fallow ground*, we ſubdue it to yield Fruit to God, and we more appropriate it, and render it uſeful to our ſelves. One that writes concerning Government and Obedi-

ence,

ence, (in opposition to Sir *Robert Filmer*) conceives that this was the way at first to divide, and appropriate parcels of the Earth to particular Persons: That as much as a Man had need of, and could Plow and Sow, that became his own. And he saith it is so in *Spain* at this day, That any Man may Plow Land, Sow, and Reap it for his own use, without opposition, or contradiction from any. It is by plowing, and breaking up of our *Fallow ground*, that we become more Masters of our selves, do more possess our own Souls, as Proprietors use them, and as Kings command, *Rev.* 1. 5, 6. in them. So much of our Souls as we Till, as we break up, is devoted to God, and is a Portion profitable to our selves. As it is the Riches of a Husband-man, to have many Acres sowed with good Corn, with useful Grain; so it will be both our Honour, and Advantage, to have many Years of our Lives sowed with the Fruits of Holiness, and Righteousness. If every Day, Month, and Year, be sowed with Fruit, that will abound to our account, *Deut.* 4. 17. how Rich, how Honorable are we?

6. Consider how infamous, and miserable we shall be at last, if we *break not up our Fallow ground. We shall neither sow to our selves in righteousness, nor reap in mercy*, Hosea

10.

10. 12. We ſhall loſe our Seed time of Grace, and our Harveſt of Glory. We ſhall only *reap corruption and deſtruction*, *Gal.* 6. 8. and be reaped as Tares, to be *caſt into a Furnace of unquenchable Fire*, Matt. 3. 12. Matt. 13. 42. *If we continue dead in ſins*, Epheſ. 2. 1. and do no good, we ſhall at laſt be Carkaſſes deſolate of all life and comfort, and enjoy no good to Eternity, *Iſa.* 66. laſt. Yea, Chriſt will fall on you as a weighty ſtone, and *grind you to pouder*, Matt. 21. 44.

7. When we *break up our Fallow ground*, we begin to do ſomething in Religion. All is nothing that we do, yea, we are nothing as to pleaſing of God, till we break up our *Fallow ground*. The Seeds-man will not go forth to ſow, till the Plow-man goeth forth, and breaketh up the Ground. As a Man cannot Graft, till the Stock be cut to let in the Graft, ſo a Husband-man cannot Sow till the Ground be Plowed, and fitted to receive the Seed. Corn will not thrive, that is ſown on whole Land; the Graſs and Weeds will kill and choke it. So Goſpel-Truths will not root deep, thrive, or proſper kindly, if our Hearts are not broken. *Till we lie down in our ſhame*, Jer. 3. laſt. We cannot *ſtand in grace*, Rom. 5. 2. Till we are convinced that we are enemies, we ſhall not take hold of the word of Reconciliation. Till we find, and

feel our ſelves ſhut up, under Sin and the Curſe, we ſhall not liſten to Chriſt as a Redeemer, calling us out of Priſon, *Iſa.* 49. 9. into the Kingdom of God. And a vain ſhew of Religion, will yield no more than a vain ſhew of Happineſs; if we bring forth no Fruit for Chriſt to eat, there will be no Feaſt for us to enjoy.

That you may *break up your Fallow ground*, obſerve theſe following Directions:

1. Be convinced of this, and be humbled for this, *That you have ſo long lain as a Fallow ground.* How evil is it, that Men have continued, perhaps twenty, thirty, forty, fifty Years, or more, a *fallow Ground?* If a *fallow* did not ſerve a *Husbandman* any other way, but by being plow'd, ſow'd, and bearing Corn, would it not be a great ſhame and loſs to him, to ſee a *Fallow* to lye thirty, forty or fifty Years, and never to plow it all this while? And ſhould it not grieve and afflict your *Souls*, that you have for many Years lain *fallow*, and have brought forth no *Fruits of Righteouſneſs to God?* *Jeremiah* ſaith of *Iſrael* to God, *They have done nothing of all that thou commandedſt them to do*, Jer. 32. 23. Sinners are wholly at Satan's beck, diſpoſe, command; he hath been ſowing, grafting, and nurſing up his Tares in them. O let this

this humble you, That the Devil hath been watering, improving, ſtrengthning your vile Luſts and Affections. O that God ſhould ſpare you ſo long, ſupport you by his arms of Power, and ſupply you out of the Treaſures of his Goodneſs, when you were not only without him, *Zeph.* 12. but alſo againſt him in the World! It is a great Evil to be without God, as if there were no ſuch glorious Being, or you had no need of him; but it is worſe to be againſt God, to walk contrary to him, to fight againſt his Laws, and Kingdom, as if he did bereave you of your Liberty and Pleaſure, and enact Laws contrary to your Freedom, Comfort, and Happineſs. How have your Luſts conſumed your Time, and eat up thoſe Years that ſhould have been Fruitful to God? O be ſenſible that you have defrauded God, by not bearing good Fruits; and have burdened him by the abundance of your evil Fruit.

2. When you begin to break up your *Fallow Ground*, O call for, and ſeek after the Aſſiſtance of the ſpirit of God, to direct the Plow, to put his Hand on it, that it may cut deep. You need that God ſhould ſpeak with a ſtrong Hand, *Iſaiah* 8. 11. That the Hand of the Lord ſhould be with them that preach, *Acts* 11. 20, 21. That when

Miniſters do ſtrike the Rock of your hearts, that the Lord ſhould ſtand on the Rock, (as he Promiſed *Moſes*) and cauſe it to cleave, and to give out Waters of Penitential Tears, *Exod.* 17. 6.

In vain do Miniſters Thunder, and Lighten in the Conſcience, if the ſpirit of God doth not ſet home Convictions, and ſeal up Inſtructions on the Soul. The Holy Ghoſt muſt Arreſt, ſeize upon, and ſhut up the Soul in Priſon, that elſe will go at Liberty, and be under no Reſtraint, either from the Command, or Threatnings of God. If Guilt, and Wrath, do not lie hard, and heavy, on the Soul, Men will not regard Reconciliation, Redemption, and Salvation. Thoſe that make light, yea, a *mock at ſin*, Prov. 14. 9. will make light of Chriſt's Feaſt, and Salvation, *Matt.* 22. 5.

We need the ſpirit of Chriſt to caſt Chains of Light, and Conviction, about us, and to ſhut us up under the bitter ſenſe of our Tranſgreſſions, and to make us ſuch cloſe Priſoners, as to ſhut out all the Worlds Comforts from us, that they may be able to adminiſter no ſupport, relief, or refreſhment to us, that we may wholly have recourſe to Chriſt, and liſten to him for Conſolation. It is very contrary to Fleſh and Blood,

Blood, for Men to acknowledge themſelves worthy of the Curſe, and to ſay *Amen* to it, *Deut.* 27. laſt. But if it be not thus, how can we run to Chriſt, that all the Promiſes may be *Amen* to us through him? We cannot ſubdue our Souls to Spiritual Tillage, if the Holy Ghoſt doth not ſubdue our Iniquities, *Micah* 7. 19.

3. We muſt take hold of God's gracious and free Promiſes, to incourage us to ſet on this Tillage, and *breaking up of our Fallow ground.*

Adam was ſent out of the Garden of *Eden* to Till the Ground; but this might much diſhearten him, That the Ground was Curſed for his ſake: And that God did threaten him, That it ſhould bring forth Thorns and Thiſtles to him: That theſe ſhould ſpring up in his Plowed Land, and grow among his Corn. It is grievous to plow and ſow under a Curſe; to break the Ground, and ſow Wheat, and yet to Reap Thorns, *Jer.* 1. 2, 13. *They ſowed wheat, but reaped thorns, and ſo were aſhamed of their Revenues.* A Harveſt of Thorns was a very ſad, and ſhameful Crop; but do not Men diſappoint God? He ſoweth good Seed, yet the Souls of Sinners *do bring forth Briars and Thorns,* Heb. 6. 8. Juſtly there-

fore may the Earth disappoint Man, when Man frustrates God. *I looked for Grapes* (saith God) *but his Vineyard brought forth wild grapes*, Isa. 5. 4. But this is a great incouragement to our Spiritual Husbandry, That there are so many great and precious Promises, that God's own Power and Grace will accomplish and fulfil. It is said, *The Wilderness shall blossom as a rose*, Isa. 35. 1. *That floods of water shall be poured out on the dry ground, to enrich and make it fruitful*, Isa. 44. 3. That the Spirit shall be poured out on the Off-spring of the Church, therefore they *should spring up as the willows by the watercourses: One should say I am the Lords, another should subscribe, and as by writing bind himself to the Lords*, Isa. 44. 4, 5. *That the deaf should hear the word of the book*, Isa. 29. 18. *And the dead should hear the voice of the Son of God, and live*, John 5. 25.

There are Promises made to Christ that he shall see his Seed; *behold the travel of his soul and be satisfied, and that by his knowledge he shall justify many*, Isa. 53. 11. *That he should call Nations, that knew not him, and they should run to him*, Isa. 55. 5. And the Apostles that God should send to the *Gentiles*, should succeed and prevail, and bring in the *Gentiles* (that are called their *Brethren*) as living Sacrifices, as holy Offerings to God's spiritual

ſpiritual Temple, *Iſa.* 66. 18, 19, 20. Therefore the Labours of God's Meſſengers cannot be in vain: As Miniſters are Plowers, and Seeds-men, ſo they ſhall be Harveſt-men, *Matt.* 9. laſt. The Seed they ſow ſhould ſpring up to a Harveſt, Hearers ſhould be Converted, gathered into the Barn of the Church, *there be threſhed and winnowed for the Garner of Heaven,* Matt. 3. 12. What ſweet and incouraging words are theſe, *I will put Laws into their inward parts, and write them in their hearts,* Jer. 31. 33. Miniſters are but as Pens, but the ſpirit doth handle theſe Pens to write an Epiſtle with them, whereby the Soul is dedicated to God and Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 3. 3.

How reviving are theſe Words, *Ezek.* 36. 26, 27. *A new Heart will I give to you, a new Spirit will I put within you: I will take away the Heart of Stone, and give a Heart of Fleſh. My Spirit alſo will I put within you, and cauſe you to walk in my Statutes, and keep my Commandments.*

As Chriſt doth ſpeak in his Miniſters, 2 *Cor.* 13. 3. ſo he works by them, and in them, *Mark* 16. 20. how greatly would Miniſters elſe be deterred from this Tillage? *Shall Horſes run on the Rock? will one plow there with Oxen?* Amos 6. 12. *Some Seed* is

laid to fall *on a Rock*, Luke 8. 6. To plow and ſow on a Rock is very uncomfortable; yet this Promiſe of God, *I will take away the Heart of Stone*, may bear up Miniſters againſt theſe Difficulties.

4. You muſt perſiſt and go on in this Work of breaking up your *fallow Ground*. As there are Fallows in the viſible Church, many there do need Converſion; ſo in the beſt of the Saints there is a carnal and unregenerate part, that well may be called a *fallow Ground*; this Ground ſhould ſtill be plowed up. More Ground in the Soul ſhould be ſubdued, converted to Tillage, and manured; there is ſtill a barren part, there is ſtill a Soil that nouriſhes Weeds, and is overrun with Thorns, this is to be broken up: We are ſow'd but in part, bear Fruit but in part; *With our fleſh we ſerve the Law of Sin*, Rom. 17. ult. *Nehemiah* complain'd, That *though their Captivity was turned*, yet they were *Servants in their own Land*; and it yielded much encreaſe to the Kings that GOD had ſet over them: *becauſe of their Sins*, Neh. 9. 36, 37. the Kings of *Perſia* were ſtill their Lords, and out of their Labours they paid Tribute, either in Money or Fruits, to them. But how much more is this to be bewail'd and lamented, that Sin and Satan have yet ſome Ground in us that beareth Fruit unto them?

them? Should we not therefore more break up our *fallow Ground?* Should not the Kingdom of Chriſt, and the Coaſts of the New Creature be more enlarged in us?

Joſhua divided to the Children of *Iſrael* even the Nations not yet conquer'd, and did yet remain in *Canaan,* and encouraged the *Iſraelites* to fight againſt them, with this Promiſe, *The Lord your God ſhall expel them from before you,* Joſhua 23. 4, 5. So all that is poſſeſſed by the Fleſh in us is divided to us, is to be the Portion and Lot of the New Creature. We ſhould ſtill therefore more crucifie and ſubdue the Fleſh, with its Affections and Luſts; the New Creature ſhould more caſt forth its Roots, and ſpread its Branches; we ſhould gain more Ground from the Sea of Corruption, and turn more of our Souls to Tillage.

5. We ſhould preſently ſet on this Work, and fall to *break up our fallow Ground.* The *Jews* ſaid, *The time was not yet come, the time that the Lord's Houſe ſhould be built,* Hag. 1. 2. So ſloathful Souls are ready to ſay, The *time is not yet come* to fall to plow, and *break up their fallow Ground*; they are yet but in their Youth, in the Morning of their days, two or three hours of their day will ſuffice to ſow Seed enough, and to provide for an Eter-

Eternal Harveſt: but this Tillage may well take up our whole Day of Life. It is to pleaſe an Infinite God, it is to enjoy an Eternal Harveſt, that we plow; God cannot ſow us to himſelf, *Hoſea* 2. ult. and we cannot ſow to our ſelves in Righteouſneſs, and reap in Mercy: We cannot bring our Sheaves with joy, and *eat the fruits of our doings* with comfort for ever, *Iſa.* 3. 10. if we do not *break up our fallow Ground.* We ſhould make haſte, and not delay to obey this Command of God, *Pſal.* 119. 59, 60. Do not mind and purſue the World, as if that were your greateſt Buſineſs and chiefeſt Happineſs: conſider, to *mind earthly things* is a great ſin, *Phil.* 3. 19. to *have our Portion in this life* is a ſore Judgment, *Pſal.* 17. 14. to *have their Backs* continually *bowed down*, to look after and purſue carnal things, is a dreadful Curſe, *Rom.* 11. 10. be perſwaded, be convinc'd that it is high time to *break up your fallow Ground*, and *to ſeek the Lord*: O deſire to be God's Huſbandry, 1 *Cor.* 3. 9. O, cry to him to enlighten your dark Minds, to break your hard Hearts, to ſpiritualize your carnal Affections: Seek God diligently, ſeek him with your whole Heart, ſeek him continually, that he would write his Law in you, ſtamp his Image on you, and graft his Word in you, *Jam.* 1. 21. and thereby graft you into Chriſt, and *plant you in the likeneſs of his Death and Reſurrection*, Rom.

Rom. 6. 5. to *root and ground you in the Faith*, Col. 2. 7. Do not delay, do not defer this neceſſary Work of Spiritual Tillage, leſt hereby you fall into the Snare of the Devil, he that now tells you it is yet too ſoon to ſet on this Work, to *break up your fallow Ground*; After your long idleneſs and negligence, the Devil may change his Temptation, and ſuggeſt to you, that the time *to break up your fallow ground* is now paſt; that it is too late to ſet on this Work, when your Hearts are harden'd by the deceitfulneſs of Sin, your Day of Grace is paſt, God's Treaſury is lock'd, his Fountain of Life is ſealed, his Bowels of Mercy ſhut: Therefore you muſt pine away in Horrour and Deſpair, and periſh for ever.

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